

REGION 6

PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Plan Prepared by
Region 6 Planning Commission

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FINAL

*Adopted by the Region 6 Policy Board
April 26, 2010*

INTRODUCTION TO PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Purpose of PTP

It is the goal of regional public transit to provide residents with lifelong mobility, offering access and transportation to people of all ages.

The following Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP) is designed to help facilitate future passenger transportation planning activities. The PTP identifies coordination barriers that result in scheduling and funding inefficiencies as well as the gaps in services that result in unmet transportation needs of constituents. The PTP identifies opportunities and provides the basis for efficient and effective passenger transportation resource allocation for future operations, maintenance, and service development.

The Region 6 PTP encompasses the four-county Region – Marshall, Tama, Poweshiek and Hardin Counties – and includes passenger transportation projects that will appear in the Region's Transportation Improvement Plan and Transportation Planning Work Program. The PTP covers the period 2011-2015, and will be subject to required annual updates.

The PTP reflects funding calculations as anticipated through the local budget process, contracted services, and state and federal sources for both transportation and human services.

The PTP follows the goals set out in the Region 6 Public Participation Plan to include participation by human service agencies, medical care providers, transit agencies, and members of the public interested in passenger transportation issues.

SECTION ONE: Introduction and Process Discussion

Planning Process

The 2010 Region 6 Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP) utilizes participation by community members from all four of the Region Six counties over a four-year period. This PTP was researched and prepared by Region 6 Planning Commission staff -- transit manager and transportation and community planners -- to provide a comprehensive and holistic passenger transportation plan. Information regarding transit inventories and transportation needs was assembled and documented by the Region Six Planning Commission staff, and that information was used in the formulation and preparation of this document.

The planning process consisted of gathering information from personal and telephone interviews, through public meetings, and an on-line survey. The information gleaned through these methods was then compared to and integrated with data obtained from various public participation activities from 2006-2008. From this effort, needs and gaps in service were then identified, a set of goals and objectives were prioritized, and actions were identified to meet them. Coordination efforts that occur on a continual basis between service providers and transit providers were reviewed. These efforts were all undertaken to identify more efficient and better transit services to a greater number of clients.

Data Gathering: 2006-2008

On April 13, 2006, Region Six Planning Commission hosted an Iowa Mobility Action Planning Workshop in Marshalltown. This was one of fifteen such workshops sponsored by the Iowa Transportation Coordination Council as part of their effort to improve transportation services statewide. At this session, participants representing numerous health and human service agencies, medical care providers, and transit agencies, as well as members of the public interested in transportation issues, identified the most critical unmet transportation needs of Tama, Marshall, Poweshiek, and Hardin Counties. A smaller group of volunteers then formed a regional Transportation Action Group (TAG) to evaluate the level of public demand and current capabilities of the transportation system region-wide. This steering committee's objective was to create a regional "Mobility Action Plan," thereby establishing goals and objectives for the provision of services that address transportation policy and unmet or under-met transportation needs, as well as anticipating those of the future.

From July through October, 2006, Marty Wymore and Donna Sampson of Region Six Planning Commission conducted 38 in-person interviews with various health and human service agencies, medical care providers, city administrators, county supervisors, and economic development professionals throughout the four-county region. The scope of these interviews focused on a wide range of transportation issues: shortfalls and deficiencies in existing transit schedules; unmet transportation needs for medical and dental appointments and for shopping, work, and social activities; rides for children of low income families to day care or Head Start; difficulties low-income workers have in getting to work and difficulties that businesses encounter in employing workers due to lack of affordable transportation; barriers to cooperative resource-sharing; and concerns and suggestions for improvements to the transportation system as a whole.

Subsequently, in 2007-2008, Transit Manager Jeff Harris conducted follow-up telephone and personal interviews with those same as well as additional health and human services providers. The information obtained from these interviews was discussed and supplemented at TAG committee meetings during calendar year 2008, and the 2009 Passenger Transportation Development Plan was developed from the data.

Public Meetings - 2009

In the fall of 2009, four county-wide public meetings were held, one in each of the four Region 6 counties. The purpose of these meetings was two-fold: (1) to celebrate 35 years of Peoplerides public transit services, and (2) to gather public comments and suggestions for improving services in the next 35 years of public transit in the Region. Attendees of previous years' Transportation Advisory Group meetings were invited to attend, along with others from supporting agencies, city and county officials and personnel, regional elected officials, public transit drivers and managers, private transportation providers, economic development and chambers of commerce, media, and the general public. The following list identifies the meeting participants.

Location	Date	Attendees
Grinnell (Poweshiek County)	9/22/09	Gordon Canfield, Mayor of Grinnell
		Chuck Brook, Iowa Transportation Museum
Iowa Falls (Hardin County)	9/24/09	Jolene Rush, Hawkeye Valley AAA
		Brandon Shaw, USDA Rural Development
Toledo (Tama County)	9/29/09	Amy Hicks, MHC of Tama County
		Nancy Blocker, Hawkeye Valley AAA
		Pat Kline, MHC of Tama County
		Starla Elsberry, Tama County CDC
		Todd Rickert, Tama County CPC
		Don Lyons, City of Dysart
		Rep. Lance Horbach, State of Iowa Legislature
		Dwayne C. Luze, Dysart Development Corp.
		Lindi Roelofse, Tama County Economic Development
Marshalltown (Marshall County)	10/1/09	Jacque Heintz, Marshall County CDC
		Cara Ferch, Hawkeye Valley AAA
		Deb Terry, Hawkeye Valley AAA
		Robin Mancieri, Hawkeye Valley, AAA
		Angela Lins-Eich, Horizons Family Service Alliance
		Sen. Steve Soddors, State of Iowa Legislature
		Tammy R. Lawson, Times-Republican
		Dave Luthro, Peoplerides driver
		Janet Bulls, Hawkeye Valley AAA

Regional Survey

In order to plan for future passenger transportation needs, Region 6/Peoplerides sent out approximately 160 surveys via www.surveymonkey.com and supplemented with hard copies to recipients without internet access. The survey was undertaken in order to gather information from transit providers, transit users, supporting agencies, city and county personnel, public transit drivers and managers, private transportation providers, economic development and

chambers of commerce, and the general public. The survey was initiated on November 5, 2009, a reminder notice was emailed on November 12, and the survey closed on November 16, 2009.

Of the 140 surveys that were emailed throughout the four counties, 58 responses were returned, for a 41.4% response rate. Hard copies of the survey were also included in the pay envelopes of 19 Region 6/Peoplerides drivers. Seven of these driver surveys were completed by hand and returned. A hard copy survey was also sent to Jewel Cab Company in Grinnell, but was not returned. We were unable to obtain a mailing or email address for the two cab companies (Cabs of Marshalltown and Sureway Cabs) in Marshalltown – only telephone numbers are in the local directory. There are no other private taxi services in the Region 6 area.

The category breakdown of total survey respondents is as follows:

Medical	5
Civic	21
Hawkeye Valley AAA	6
Social services/programs	14
Transportation	2
Region 6/Peoplerides (non-drivers)	4
Peoplerides drivers	7
Unknown	6

Public Input Meetings

A public input session was held on December 10, 2009, at the Public Library in Marshalltown. A public meeting announcement was sent to local media in all four counties, posted on the bulletin board in the Region 6 Planning Commission lobby, and sent via email to the same recipients as the survey as well as additional contacts. The purpose of this meeting was to present a summary of the survey results and solicit public comments and suggestions for planning transit improvements. The public was encouraged to attend and participate in the discussion. Other than Region 6/Peoplerides staff, no one attended the meeting.

A second public input meeting was held on January 19, 2010, at the Public Library in Marshalltown, following the same announcement and invitation procedures as the December 2009 meeting. Although there were a few requests for a copy of the plan, no one from the TAG Committee nor any members of the public attended this meeting.

Public Review

The PTP and the planning process were reviewed and open for question and discussion at two regular Region 6 Policy Board meetings in March and April, 2010. These meetings are open to the public, and the Agenda is posted and distributed to the media.

The final PTP was approved and adopted by the Region 6 Planning Commission Policy Board on April 26, 2010.

SECTION TWO: Inventory

Marshalltown Municipal Transit (MMT) System

Passenger transportation for the general public in the City of Marshalltown is provided by Marshalltown Municipal Transit (MMT). Marshalltown has the only small urban transit system operating within the Region. (See **Inventories**, attached.)

Hours of service are 7:10 a.m. to 5:57 p.m., Monday through Friday. Service generally includes 2 busses operating on four routes with 30 minute headways. The City offers complementary paratransit service with the same hours for disabled people. Express bus routes are offered at peak times, which primarily assist the K-12 schools.

No service is available on weekends or on seven observed holidays. The Marshalltown Transit fixed route is accessible to persons with disabilities. MMT buses are able to provide a total of 20 wheelchair spaces, depending on the configuration of passenger seat to wheelchair ratio.

MMT has a full time transit manager, a part time dispatcher, a full time mechanic, and 7 full and part time drivers.

Region 6 - Peoplerides

Region 6 Planning Commission operates Peoplerides, the only regional public transit system within the four-county planning area. The system operates on a demand response basis. There are currently 22 vehicles in the fleet. All of the vehicles fully comply with all Americans with Disabilities Act standards. All of the vehicles have lifts or ramps to assist persons with disabilities. (See **Inventories**, attached.) Region 6 has one full time transit manager, two full time dispatchers, and 17 full and part-time drivers.

Iowa Veterans Home

The IVH has:

- 3 buses that will each hold 7 wheelchairs and 16 passengers
- 6 Carevan minivans that hold 5 passengers or 1 cot
- 5 Ford E-350 that each holds 3 wheelchairs and 6 sit ups, or 16 sit ups
- 3 sedans for individual rides and staff use

IVH uses these vehicles to take residents to medical appointments and recreational activities. They log approximately 450,000 miles and have an operations expenditure of approximately \$500,000. They have a full-time administrator, 6 full-time drivers, and 1 part-time driver.

Nursing Homes

Region 6 surveyed the 17 nursing homes in the area, with a total fleet of 4 buses and 14 mini-vans. These vehicles average approximately 3,000 per year. Only about half of the vehicles have either a lift or a ramp.

K-12 Public Schools

Region 6 staff conducted an in-person transportation interview with the 15 public school systems around the region. These systems include: Iowa Falls, ENP, AGWSR, South Tama, Grinnell, Montezuma, Marshalltown, BCLUW, GMG, Hubbard-Radcliffe, West Marshall, BGM, North Tama, Gladbrook-Reinbeck, and East Marshall. These districts drive more than 1.47 million miles annually with 134 vehicles. Annual ridership is estimated to be more than 2.2 million rides. All the districts except Montezuma, BGM, North Tama, and Gladbrook-Reinbeck have ADA accessible vehicles. The number of annual lift operations is estimated at more than 14,000. The following districts have students that need lifts – ENP, AGWSR, South Tama, Grinnell, Marshalltown, West Marshall, and East Marshall. The number of lift operations ranges from 2 to 24. Many districts transport special education students to a program in Waterloo. The following districts currently transport K-12 students to Waterloo in a district vehicle – Iowa Falls, ENP, AGWSR, Marshalltown, GMG, Hubbard-Radcliffe, North Tama, Gladbrook Reinbeck, and East Marshall. The following districts send some special education students to Marshalltown – Grinnell, BCLUW, GMG, West Marshall, and East Marshall. There are a few districts that send special education students to alternate places.

In the small public school districts, most except Marshalltown, transportation management is a function of the school superintendent. The small districts have a school transportation supervisor who is generally responsible for maintaining busses and arranging drivers. The superintendents do not have any extra time for any non-district school transportation functions like scheduling and arranging rides. The districts were somewhat willing to have a regular recurring rider picked up with the K-12 students, provided that the schedule does not change much.

Integrating public transit with K-12 transportation would be a huge challenge. K-12 providers are typically concerned about general public mixing with K-12, because of possible child safety issues. If this could be addressed coordinating the systems would be a good passenger transportation improvement. Maybe some limited rides could be coordinated, as in some disabled routes with special education services.

Central Iowa Residential Services (CIRSI)

- Number of vehicles used for passenger transportation: 1
- Estimated miles per year per vehicle: 5,000
- Location of vehicle: Adult Day Program, 202 West State Street, Marshalltown, Iowa
- Number of vehicles fully ADA accessible (lift and sufficient headroom): 1
- Estimated annual passengers transported with vehicle: 100

CIRSI has a lift equipped non-ADA compliant conversion van. This vehicle is used for special outings of the Special Focus day treatment program and group housing transportation. This vehicle gets minimal usage. Housing staff use personal vehicles to drive consumers to appointments and necessary activities. This vehicle does not present many coordination problems, but it is an extra vehicle. Both MMT and Peoplerides provide daily transportation services for CIRSI programs and clients.

Veterans Affairs

Marshall County and Tama County Veterans Affairs programs have leased minivans through the State of Iowa Department of Administrative Services Veterans Affairs program. Marshall County has two leased vehicles. Tama County has one leased minivan. Hardin and Poweshiek Veterans Affairs offices do not have vehicles. The annual expenses for these vehicles is paid by the Department of Administrative Services. The vehicle drivers are volunteers. They only transport veterans; this is either a local or federal rule, according to the local veterans affairs programs. The vehicles are available five days per week. The vehicles are not accessible for disabled riders. Individuals who use wheelchairs must find an alternate transportation provider. There is some spare capacity on the vehicles.

Hawkeye Valley Area Agency on Aging

HVAAA has a volunteer transit system that is a Peoplerides contract service. These services are scheduled through the county council on aging offices. If there was sufficient staffing it may be beneficial to coordinate these volunteer services with regional public transit services. Some additional rides could be scheduled with volunteers or some of the volunteer rides could be scheduled onto public transit routes. This would save the volunteers for the one-person long distance routes and the others would be placed onto public transit services.

Intercity Bus

The only intercity bus carrier with stops within the region is Burlington Trailways - <http://www.burlingtontrailways.com/>. The bus stop is at the Marshalltown truck stop at Iowa Avenue and 18th Avenue. Marshalltown Transit will assist people on demand to get to this carrier, but it is not on a regular route. Annually only 2-3 people request a special trip to this location. The typical person requesting an MMT ride to the bus stop is a low income person under age 60.

Carpool or Vanpool

There are no organized carpool or vanpool programs originating from the Region to take residents from their homes in one county or city in the Region to employment located in another county or city in the Region. Central Iowa Rideshare has vans going from places in Region 6 to the Des Moines area with regional residents. Four or five vans also originate in Central Iowa and come into the Region, primarily bringing people from Des Moines to work at JBS Swift & Company meat plant in Marshalltown. Some of the Region's large employers would benefit from organized carpool or vanpool programs within Region 6. In a rural area like Region 6, an organized carpool program appears to be the more beneficial, since there may not be sufficient density for a vanpool. Software like <http://www.greenride.com/> appears to be an easy to use carpool coordination program. This same software provider can also assist with a vanpool program. If some employers embrace a partnership with the public transit providers, it would be good to expand the public transit availability. Organizing a carpool or vanpool program will continue to be a public transit goal.

SECTION THREE: Needs and Gap Analysis

A. Demographic (socio/economic) characteristics within Region 6.

In 2002, Iowa had an 8,493 person net natural population increase. However, Region 6 counties netted only about 100 more births than deaths in 2002, with Marshall County contributing the most to this positive natural population change. Tama County had only minimal natural population growth, while Hardin and Poweshiek Counties actually saw a decrease.

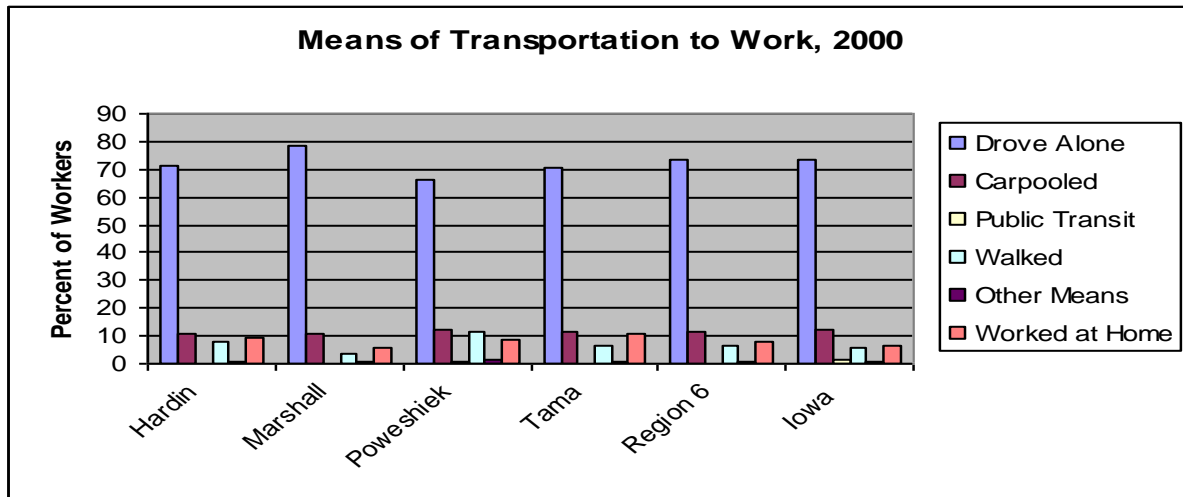
The Region's population is growing older, with a substantial increase in retired and elderly residents. Unique needs of this segment of the regional population offer challenges and opportunities for transportation-related programs and projects to keep this population living in the Region while maintaining an independent and high quality of life. Improving the regional and Marshalltown transit programs to accommodate the growing needs of elderly residents will continue to be a key goal.

The current Region 6 population trends toward low or negative natural population growth indicate that in-migration will be necessary to achieve population stability or significant population increases in the future. The influx of young immigrant families into Marshall County comprises a significant portion of the increasing population base of that county, and the decreasing population base in the other Region 6 counties is indicative of the importance of in-migration to the Region's economic sustainability. Those counties with the least natural growth must compete for workers from adjacent counties because there will be insufficient workforce within the local county to sustain viable industry in the area. Region 6 businesses and industry may have to attract workers from outside the regional boundaries to sustain a workforce. These issues will have a direct impact on the existing regional transit system needs of the future.

Between 1990 and 2000, driving alone in an automobile to work increased for every Region 6 county. Because the Region is made up of small rural communities, few workers are employed in their own home towns. As there are minimal programs in the Region to promote rideshare, carpool, or vanpool, Region 6 has the opportunity to address some of these commuter issues through ride-sharing or enhanced public transit services.

Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. has projected that the regional population will rise very slightly through the year 2020. Most of that increase will most likely come from probable growth in Marshalltown. Woods & Poole has also projected that populations of Hardin, Tama, and Poweshiek Counties will remain stagnant. The trend of persons moving from rural areas into or nearer metropolitan centers in the same county or within the Region will likely continue. However, these projections could be influenced substantially by a large external event, such as the addition or loss of a major employer.

Means of Transportation to Work



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

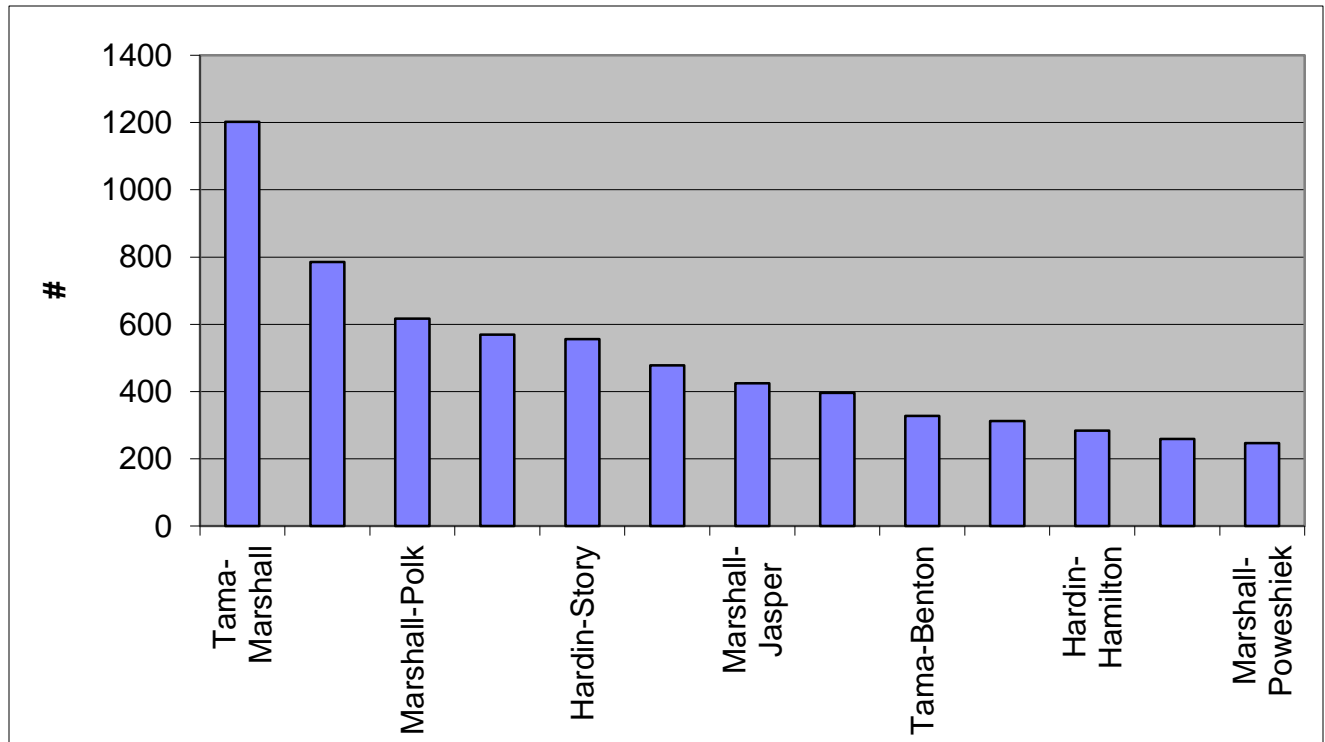
Especially in the most rural areas of the Region, someone without a driver's license or vehicle faces daily transportation challenges. The regional transit system is not designed to provide transportation for employment to non-disabled workers. Statistically, more disabled people in the Region use public transit services than do non-disabled. For many disabled people, public transit is their only resource for transportation. However, it is often difficult or inconvenient to access the existing transit system. Many of the elderly population may be driving beyond their abilities to do so safely. Regional transit prices are perceived by many to be too expensive, keeping some people from using the system and prohibiting them from obtaining necessary medical and other essential services.

Providing accessible and affordable transit options, and attracting people to use alternative transportation modes, such as public transit, will be an ever-increasing challenge into the future. Changes to the existing public transportation system will be needed to enable more people to access services and employment in the Region.

Commuting Patterns

In today's economy, commuting for work is very common. Region 6 anticipates that the amount of commuting will continue to increase from smaller rural communities to the larger urban employment centers.

Commuting from Region 6 County to Another County



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

More than 6,400 workers are distributed among various inter- and intra-county commuter routes as follows:

- Almost 2,000 workers from Tama County commute to either Marshall or Black Hawk Counties, which makes Tama the largest county of origin for commuting in the Region.
- Nearly 1,200 workers from Marshall County also commute to either Polk or Tama Counties.
- More than 800 workers from Hardin County commute to Story or Hamilton Counties.
- More than 950 workers from Poweshiek County commute to Iowa, Jasper, or Polk Counties.

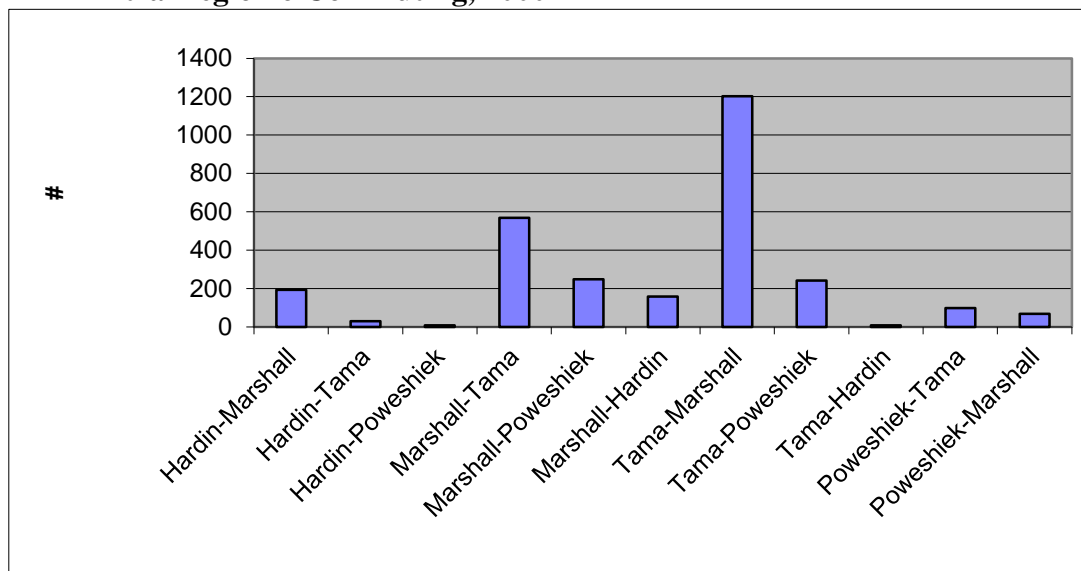
These commuting trends have implications for the Region's future planning efforts.

- Decreasing population density further exacerbates the trend of dependence on personal automobiles for transportation.
- Less density means greater distance between destinations and an increased likelihood that someone will need to use a private vehicle to get to work, shopping, medical appointments, and church or social activities.
- Convincing people to change lifestyles and reverse this trend will be very difficult, even if population density were to increase substantially.
- Decreasing population density also increases the cost per ride for operating public transit. Because of low population density in the Region, Peoplerides public transit system has a lower ridership and the cost per mile of operating the vehicle must be spread out over fewer riders than is necessary in other, more densely populated regions.

- Changes in population due to addition or closure of a major employment center, as well as changes in commuting patterns, will affect the need for and availability of better commuting alternatives.
- Increased transportation infrastructure spending in Region 6 counties will be needed to maintain primary commuter routes in good condition.
- Increased transit services will be critical for keeping the low-income elderly population living independently and out of nursing home or assisted living facilities when their only handicap is an inability to drive or to afford a car.

The marked increase in the number of people working in other counties illustrates a need for collaborative, regional efforts to meet these transportation needs. Providing employment transportation from one county to another would be a significant challenge for the regional transit system. The solutions may include vanpool systems, work transit routes, and carpool programs, none of which currently exist.

Intra-Region 6 Commuting, 2000

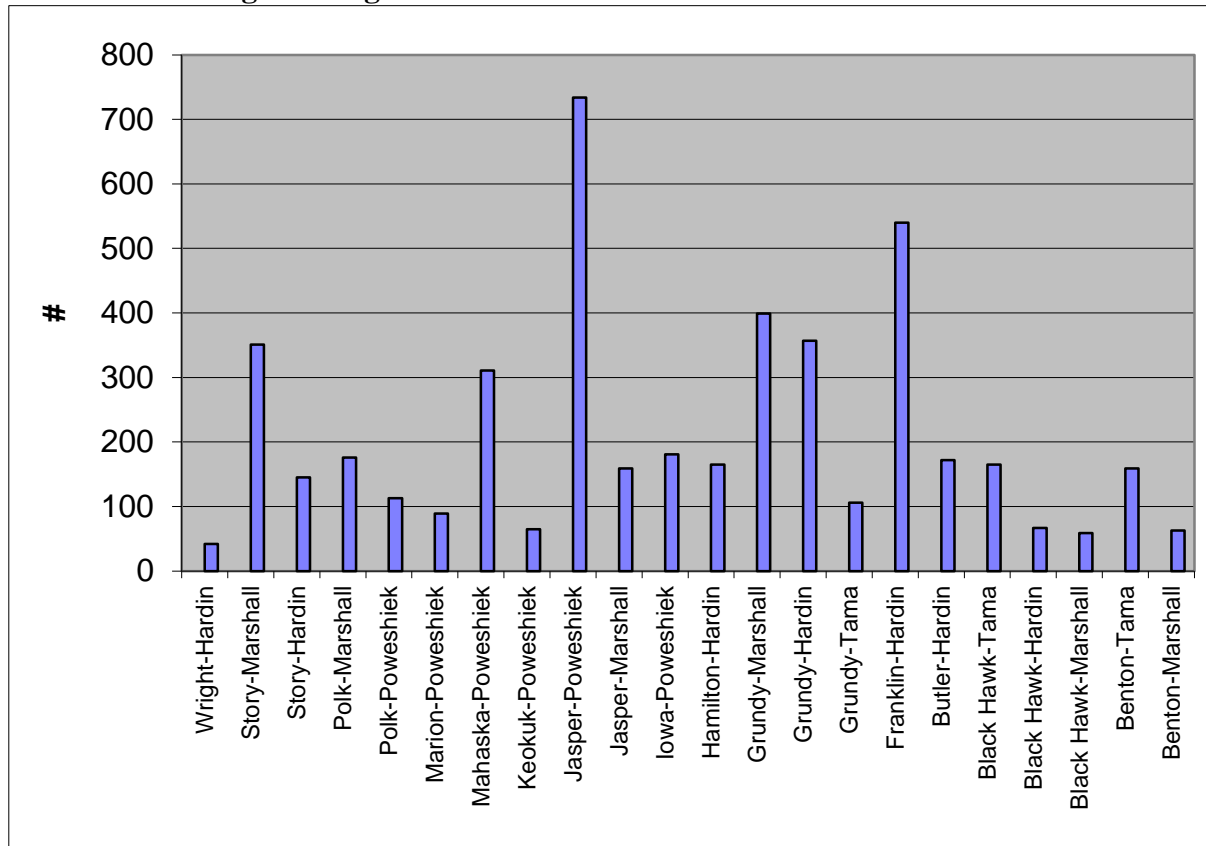


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

The most extensive commuting between counties within Region 6 occurs between Tama and Marshall Counties. The number of commuters between Hardin-Marshall, Marshall-Poweshiek, Marshall-Hardin, and Tama-Poweshiek is nearly even at about 200 workers. The other locations have 100 workers or less. No commuting was recorded from Poweshiek to Hardin County.

More than 4,600 workers come into Region 6 for employment from non-Region 6 counties. There are three tiers of data for commuting into Region 6 counties. The first tier, Jasper to Poweshiek, far exceeds the others in the number of workers commuting across the county lines. Franklin to Hardin County makes up the second tier. The Story to Marshall, Mahaska to Poweshiek, Grundy to Marshall, and Grundy to Hardin commuting patterns share a similar number. The data indicate a low level of all other non-Region into Region 6 commutes. There are no public options for commuters except for the vanpool programs into Polk County from outlying counties.

Commuting into Region 6 from Other Select Counties



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

B. Layout of the study area.

Employment is not the only reason for commuting. Besides employment tending to concentrate in the larger population centers, essential services such as grocery stores, health care providers, hospitals, and entertainment or activity centers are leaving the smaller rural communities and concentrating in the larger communities. Few small communities can support a grocery store, leaving them to rely on the convenience stores/gas stations. Many of the smaller communities would feel lucky to have even that amenity. (See attached **Maps.**)

As the attached maps show, there are large portions of the Region that are lacking essential services. There are 44 incorporated communities in the Region, but only 13 have medical clinics, 8 have dental services, and 3 have hospitals. Although there is a large number of elderly living and nursing home or assisted living facilities in the Region, the residents of those facilities in 11 of the Region's communities must be transported to other towns where medical centers are located to obtain needed medical services, residents of 16 facilities must be transported out of town for dental services, and residents of 21 facilities require long-distance transportation to a hospital. There are no medical clinics in northeast Tama County, resulting in patients needing transportation to Waterloo in neighboring Black Hawk County. Transportation to hospitals or clinics farther away, such as Ames in Story County, Waterloo in Black Hawk County, Mason City in Cerro Gordo County, and Iowa City in Johnson County, is often required for medical care for this especially vulnerable population.

Mental health care is even more problematic. All of the Region 6 counties are an underserved area. There is a huge shortage of psychiatrists across rural Iowa. This means that mental health cases have further to go for appropriate treatments. Going long distances for care is not an option since the people with persistent mental illness generally have low incomes and poor transportation options. If the care is not convenient, people with mental illness will likely either not seek treatment or be unable to get themselves to treatment facilities. The result is that people with persistent mental illness do not receive adequate care.

C. Gap analysis between services currently being provided and what services are needed.

A summary of the service gaps across the region include the following:

- **Need affordable transportation options.** This is a special problem for rural rides. Rides are generally available in the day time in Iowa Falls, Marshalltown, and Grinnell. Other places do not have many transportation options. Transportation services are available from the public and private providers, but cost presents a large barrier. Peoplerides cost for rural rides ranges from \$17/round trip to more than \$100/round trip. Many trips are available at a non-subsidized rate of \$40/hour because of limited financial support. Transportation cost needs to be in the \$2-5/ride range to be affordable for everyone and to attract use. This will require more subsidy or substantially higher ridership. More significant ridership is not high feasible with many rural transit programs.
- **Need transportation options for rural longer distance commuters and others.** Current public and private transportation services are not properly designed for rural long distance workers. Routes have been primarily established to serve some disabled and some elderly needs. It is not very feasible to get a rural ride on a vehicle with a normal 8 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. schedule. These rides may be available if there is sufficient equipment in the area but the cost will be \$40/hour. The daily cost then would be roughly \$80/day for many trips, which is not feasible for many workers.
- **Need attractive transportation options to reduce energy dependence and get fragile drivers off the road.** Transportation options are not attractive enough to reduce regional energy use. Getting elderly out of their vehicles is a challenge. The primary problems include routes that take too long, are not available, and/or cost too much. Cost is a key barrier to attracting some frail elderly transit riders.
- **Need affordable transportation options for evening and weekend services.** In the larger regional cities – Iowa Falls, Marshalltown, and Grinnell -- there are some transportation options during the daytime, Monday through Friday. There are no public transportation options in the evening or weekends. The private providers offer transportation in Marshalltown and Grinnell in the evenings and weekends. Cost is a barrier for many lower income people on these private routes. The cost for a one way ride within a city is \$8+. Rural transportation options outside of these places are fairly non-existent. In each county Peoplerides offers routes for disabled, but that generally includes a Monday through Friday 8-9 am route and drop off time and then a 1-3 pm pickup and drop off time.
- **Need coordinated long distance education transportation options.** Nine of the 15 school districts transport K-12 students to special education schools in a non-coordinated

manner to Waterloo. Five districts also transport special education students into Marshalltown. The lack of coordination of these services presents an opportunity to save school districts funding and increase the public transit service opportunities.

D. Comprehensive assessment of potential coordination opportunities among the various passenger transportation providers.

Region 6 has identified a few coordination opportunities to increase passenger transportation options. These opportunities include:

- **Coordinate special education routes to Waterloo and Marshalltown.** In order to coordinate a route between the nine schools and Waterloo, 2-3 small busses would be needed instead of small vans or sedans. At least 3 small busses would be needed to serve the special education programs in Marshalltown. It would take 18 months of planning to meet these possibilities. The earliest that this would be ready is the Fall of the 2011/2012 school year.
- **Coordinate K-12 education services closer with public transit rides.** MMT, the regional transit system, does not have capacity to transport many additional riders on the vehicles. A few of the passengers may overlap. PeoplesRides has not compared routes closely between schools and our public transit program. MMT provides several special express routes that primarily serve students. It would be difficult to dramatically reduce the public school transportation budgets. Given that the districts have such a large transportation program, this would be an opportunity to substantially expand the public transit availability.
- **Reduce cost for evening transportation where private providers are located.** Marshalltown and Grinnell have private transportation operators that operate from 6-7 am to midnight, 7 days per week. The demand past public transit hours (4 pm in Grinnell and 6 pm in Marshalltown) is minimal. It would be difficult to justify public transit services after 6 pm in either place Monday–Friday. A voucher program to reduce the cost of rides for qualifying lower income riders would be a nice service. Saturday all day and Sunday morning public transit service in Grinnell and Marshalltown would be a nice service to offer. These services may be able to justify continuation with sufficient ridership.
- **Evaluate whether general public passenger services can be expanded by accessing Iowa Veterans Home and/or county level Veterans Affairs vehicles.** This is more of a statewide issue than a Region 6 issue. Region 6 does not have enough power to exert any authority over these state level programs. State resources would need to tell these programs that they need to assist others in going on routes when there is capacity on the vehicle and the general public passenger would not pose any threat or delay for the veteran.
- **Evaluate the cost for human service agencies to use employee owned cars for transportation.** Most of the human services groups do not have cars. Region 6 Planning has anecdotally heard that many of the case managers provide transportation in their own personal cars for many disabled clients. It would be interesting to see how much the total mileage expense is for that, which could potentially be shifted to passenger transportation services.

Addressing these coordination barriers is a very large challenge. State level cooperation would also be needed to achieve substantial changes. Some changes may be feasible with sufficient review. With many of the above activities, having at least a ride coordinator position for the region would be beneficial. This person could work closely with the schools and private providers to increase opportunities. Some of the activities of this person could also assist the marketing and awareness issues facing the public transit providers.

1. Review of Prior Public Input (and new inputs) Concerning Needs.

Public Input - Mobility Action Planning – 2006-2008

On April 13, 2006, Region 6 Planning Commission hosted an Iowa Mobility Action Planning Workshop in Marshalltown. This was one of fifteen such workshops sponsored by the Iowa Transportation Coordination Council as part of their effort to improve transportation services statewide. At this session, participants representing numerous health and human service agencies, medical care providers, and transit agencies, as well as members of the public interested in transportation issues, identified the most critical unmet transportation needs of Tama, Marshall, Poweshiek, and Hardin Counties. A smaller group of volunteers then formed a regional Transportation Action Group (TAG) to evaluate the level of public demand and current capabilities of the transportation system region-wide. This steering committee's objective was to create a regional "Mobility Action Plan," thereby establishing goals and objectives for the provision of services that address transportation policy and unmet or under-met transportation needs, as well as anticipating those of the future.

It was the general consensus at the April workshop and the subsequent TAG work sessions that there are critical shortfalls in the current transportation system, leaving many clients un- or underserved. Also, some agencies might have resources, such as a van or bus, that are underutilized. It was suggested that perhaps an arrangement could be developed for sharing these resources to better serve all clients.

From July through October, 2006, Marty Wymore and Donna Sampson of Region 6 Planning Commission conducted 38 in-person interviews with various health and human service agencies, medical care providers, city administrators, county supervisors, and economic development professionals throughout the four-county region. The scope of these interviews focused on a wide range of transportation issues: shortfalls and deficiencies in existing transit schedules; unmet transportation needs for medical and dental appointments and for shopping, work, and social activities; rides for children of low income families to day care or Head Start; difficulties low-income workers have in getting to work and difficulties that businesses encounter in employing workers due to lack of dependable and affordable transportation; barriers to cooperative resource-sharing; and concerns and suggestions for improvements to the transportation system as a whole.

Positives:

- Agencies are finding some way to provide transportation services for most of the critical needs of their clients, even if it is in the personal vehicles of their staff.

- Some clients get rides with family members, ride-share with friends who can drive, rely upon volunteers, or they walk.
- Some churches have a van that picks up elderly members for services.
- Some clients do have transportation resources of their own.
- Peoplerides and Carevan are doing a good job.
- Bus service in Marshalltown is well-regarded by those who are able to access it.
- If the goal is to help people achieve or maintain independence, then riding the Peoplerides van or public bus is a way to help them do that.

Negatives:

- Affordability is a relative term; costs of regional transit system are too high for some clients, especially for non-medical trips.
- Trips to out-of-town medical appointments (e.g., Iowa City, Des Moines, Ames) are too expensive.
- Hours of service are too short.
- 24-hour notice requirement limits availability and use.
- Hours of MMT service are too short and no routes available on weekends.
- The wait and inconvenience of riding a city bus keep some from riding.
- The two existing city bus routes don't cover the entire city.
- Some low income clients drive without insurance or a license.
- Some drive in unsafe vehicles.
- Many seniors who should not be driving are still on the road.
- Some clients forego the essential services that they need.

Barriers to agencies providing transportation for clients:

- Difficulty in finding volunteers to drive their own vehicles because of cost of gas and liability insurance.
- Difficulty in finding qualified drivers to drive an agency vehicle, even when they are being paid and insured.
- High cost of vehicle acquisition, maintenance, insurance, gas & driver is cost-prohibitive.

Barriers to resource-sharing between agencies:

- Regulations of government or other funding source that bar a vehicle from being used for anything but the express purposes for which it was purchased.
- Challenges for scheduling incompatible clients together posed by the wide range in age, disability, and medical condition of clients, as well as type and location of appointments.
- The need for special accommodations which may not be available in all agency-owned vehicles, such as child restraints, wheelchair access, etc.

Public Input -- Calendar Year 2009

In the fall of 2009, four county-wide public meetings were held, one in each of the four Region 6 counties. The purpose of these meetings was two-fold: (1) to celebrate 35 years of Peoplerides public transit services, and (2) to gather public comments and suggestions for improving services in the next 35 years of public transit in the Region. Attendees of previous years' Transportation Advisory Group meetings were invited to attend, along with others from supporting agencies,

city and county officials and personnel, regional elected officials, public transit drivers and managers, private transportation providers, economic development and chambers of commerce, media, and the general public. The following chart summarizes the input resulting from the four county-wide visioning sessions. (Comments are not necessarily those of Attendees listed on corresponding lines in adjacent column.)

Place of Meeting	Date	Attendees	Comments
Grinnell (Poweshiek County)	9/22/09	Gordon Canfield, Mayor of Grinnell	Service is needed for special community events; Expanded service needed evenings and Saturdays
		Chuck Brook, Iowa Transportation Museum	Ideal in town rates from “reasonable” to \$3.00 each way; current cost of \$2.00 is affordable; in county rates from \$5.00 - \$15.00; out of county from \$8.00 to \$30.00 is reasonable.
			Have brochures in doctors’ offices
			Need carpooling options to Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Co.
Iowa Falls (Hardin County)	9/24/09	Jolene Rush, Hawkeye Valley AAA	Need route to Ames; cheaper Iowa Falls taxi pricing
		Brandon Shaw, USDA Rural Development	Rates in town affordable at \$2.50; in county from \$5.00 - \$13.00; out of county \$10.00
			Peoplerides has excellent drivers!
			Possible funding source: Hardin County Endowment Fund
Toledo (Tama County)	9/29/09	Amy Hicks, MHC of Tama County	Good cooperation with Peoplerides staff and drivers; employees should assist clients with Title 19 paperwork; need to reduce “stigma” of riding public transit.
		Nancy Blocker, Hawkeye Valley AAA	Rates in town suggested at \$2.00 to \$3.00; in county from \$4.00 to \$7.00; out of county \$5.00 to \$15.00.
		Pat Kline, MHC of Tama County	Service gaps include: Need day of trips for any purpose to Marshalltown at reduced cost; trips to physical therapy, dentist, psych, etc.; fixed shopping routes; recreational opportunities; medical routes; set routes so people can expect when to expect bus and return;
		Starla Elsberry, Tama County CDC	Suggestions for funding: city per capita transit levies or city volunteer per capita support; civic groups sponsor with local fund raising (but funds should be dedicated to stay locally within that city).
		Todd Rickert, Tama County CPC	
		Don Lyons, City of Dysart	
		Rep. Lance Horbach, State of Iowa Legislature	
		Dwayne C. Luze, Dysart Development Corp.	
		Lindi Roelofse, Tama County Economic Development	

Marshalltown (Marshall County)	10/1/09	Jacque Heintz, Marshall County CDC	"We need these services."
		Cara Ferch, Hawkeye Valley AAA	Rates affordable: in town from \$4.00 to \$5.00 each way; in county from \$8.00 to \$12.00; out of county from \$20.00.
		Deb Terry, Hawkeye Valley AAA	Suggestions: weekends and to church; monthly passes; vehicles easier for elderly to get in and out of, e.g., a car or ½ step on bigger busses for clients not in wheelchair; 24-hour service including weekends; medical services to Ames and Des Moines; more city and county funding; more effective marketing;.
		Robin Mancieri, Hawkeye Valley, AAA	
		Angela Lins-Eich, Horizons Family Service Alliance	
		Sen. Steve Soddors, State of Iowa Legislature	
		Tammy R. Lawson, Times- Republican	
		Dave Luthro, Peoplerides driver	
		Janet Bulls, Hawkeye Valley AAA	

Regional Survey – 2009

In order to plan for future passenger transportation needs, Region 6/Peoplerides sent out approximately 160 surveys via www.surveymonkey.com and some hard copies to gather information from transit providers, transit users, supporting agencies, city and county personnel, public transit drivers and managers, private transportation providers, economic development and chambers of commerce, and the general public. The survey was initiated on November 5, 2009, a reminder notice was emailed on November 12, and the survey was closed on November 16, 2009.

Of the 140 surveys that were emailed throughout the four counties, 58 responses were returned, for a 41.4% response rate. Hard copies of the survey were also included in the pay envelopes of 19 Region 6/Peoplerides drivers. Seven of these driver surveys were completed by hand and returned. A hard copy survey was also sent to Jewel Cab Company in Grinnell, but was not returned. We were unable to obtain a mailing or email address for the two cab companies (Cabs of Marshalltown and Sureway Cabs) in Marshalltown – only telephone numbers are in the local directory. There are no other private taxi services in the Region 6 area.

The needs identified in responses to the public transit survey that was completed by Region 6/Peoplerides in November 2009 are summarized below:

Identified Service Need	Health & Social Service Providers
medical/dental appointments	76.3%
shopping – grocery and personal	52.6%
recreational activities	47.4%
Work	36.8%
government services	28.9%
school/educational appointments	26.3%
Library	21.1%
business appointments	15.8%
Church and nursing homes	5%

The majority of survey respondents do not think that current public, school, and private taxi related transportation services meet the transportation needs and expectations in Hardin, Marshall, Poweshiek, and Tama Counties.

The area of greatest need is perceived to be medical/dental appointments (76.3%). (For a complete list, see the chart below.) Shopping (grocery and personal) ranks second, with 52.6%, and recreational activities place third at 47.4%. Transportation to work is also perceived as an important need to 36.8% of respondents.

Evening and weekend hours are needed according to 65% of the survey respondents, and 42.6% of respondents feel that work-related inter-community transportation options to major employers are needed.

The response was 50/50 to the question of whether or not the current public transit and private taxi-related transportation fares prevent people from using or limit their usage of transportation services. Fares suggested as being affordable range from \$1.00 to \$5.00 for a ride across town one way. For a ride from one city to another city in the same county, the round trip fare suggested as affordable ranges from \$3.00 to \$10.00 an hour. From a location in one county to a neighboring county, round trip fares were suggested at between \$3.00 and \$25.00, or \$10.00 an hour. It was also noted that the current \$35.00 an hour is not affordable, although for some clients \$35.00 for the whole trip might be affordable.

Summary

Data gathered from calendar year 2009 do not differ significantly from data collected during the previous three years. The most critical transportation needs identified were for those unable to drive or who cannot afford to own or maintain a car.

Regularly-scheduled intra- and inter-county transportation opportunities are critical for those who cannot drive. The lack of transportation in the early mornings, late evenings, or on weekends limits work and job training opportunities. This is a critical issue for clients in all four counties in the Region. Extending hours of service and scheduling more daily trips between smaller communities is a high priority.

Transportation for out-of-town medical trips, especially to Iowa City, is a big problem for almost everyone, where the need is greatest for specialized and urgent care for elderly, disabled, children, at-risk pregnancies, and for dental care.

The elderly population is increasing in Region 6 counties. Alternative modes of transportation are needed that are attractive, inexpensive, and convenient enough to persuade the elderly to give up maintaining and driving their own vehicles when it is no longer safe for them to do so.

Given the sparse population throughout the four counties of Region 6, the regional transit system has not been able to provide a readily accessible and cost-effective transit service to many of the rural areas within the region. While the transit system is moderately able to serve the transit needs of the two towns other than Marshalltown that have a population of over 5,000 people (Iowa Falls and Grinnell), the majority of the Region 6 area remains underserved.

In Marshalltown, the location of bus stops and frequency of routes are a problem, especially in bad weather and when accompanied by small children. Taking children to child care or the doctor, often with several other children in tow, is difficult at best when attempting to take a city bus and unaffordable if relying on the regional transit system. Thus affordable, on-demand transportation services are greatly needed for this population.

A growing segment of the population in the Region 6 area, as in all of Iowa, is the immigrant population. Income, cultural, and language barriers exacerbate the problems associated with achieving mobility and establishing residency in a rural state.

2. Review of Status of Previously Recommended Projects

Long-Term Transit Service Goals Established by TAG Committee 2006

Region 6 Transportation Action Group met on November 15, 2006, and reviewed the findings of the in-person interviews and the ensuing summary document. The TAG team prioritized the following goals for the four-year planning period encompassed by this PTP:

- Add enhancements to existing rural transit services, e.g., regularly scheduled trips from smaller communities to employment centers and health care facilities.
- Expand current Region 6 central dispatch function to include other ride programs.
- Obtain public funding for Region 6 similar to what other regional transit programs have in order to provide lower fares for all regardless of age or disability status, e.g., Region 2 (\$0.65/capita) or Region 16 (\$1.00/capita).
- Create "more realistic" fee schedules, especially for Iowa city trips (e.g., \$25 to \$35 per trip).

The TAG group was also highly interested in establishing a better general public local subsidy system and creating fixed routes to out-of-town medical care providers.

Goals Addressed/Accomplished

Peoplerides and Region 6 Planning Commission staff have taken steps to address the past plan goals. Past projects include:

- **Hardin County Pilot Routes.** Peoplerides has tried a number of different pilot programs to try to attract ridership and serve local needs. In Hardin County we marketed twice a week service into Iowa Falls and Eldora for \$5/day for unlimited trips. In about 16 months, this service had less than 20 riders so the service was discontinued.
- **Marshall County Pilot Route to Ames.** Peoplerides marketed a weekly service to the Mary Greeley Cancer Center and the Marshall County cancer support group. This service was targeted for radiation treatments. Only 1 person over a 12 month time period used the service. The service was discontinued.
- **Iowa City Weekly Route.** After the 2006 study results supported providing a route to Iowa City Hospitals, Peoplerides decided to offer weekly Iowa City service. This service was funded through an FTA New Freedom grant. We provide service when there is demand. We typically have 2-3 riders when we go to Iowa City clinics. The cost is \$38/trip. Many of the cases are Medicaid clients, who could not afford to get to Iowa City without our assistance. We continue to provide this service.
- **More General Public Transit Support.** We currently get about \$19,000 of public transit support from Hardin County. Historically Marshalltown Medical & Surgical Center has provided about \$21,000 of support for county-wide medical rides, but they recently reduced their support to be less than \$10,000 for only certain medical rides. Tama County provides about \$12,000 of support for medical transportation rides. Until July 2009, Grinnell Regional Medical Center provided some support for medical rides to GRMC facilities and physicians. Their support drastically decreased in July 2008, and due to financial concerns, it was eliminated in 2009. We have no support to reduce the cost of a ride on our disabled and other routes. We have met with all counties and we are limited to these historical amounts. Lowering the cost per ride is a goal on all of our routes.
- **Public Transit Vehicles Replacement.** MMT and Peoplerides have had a number of vehicles replaced with federal capital assistance. MMT is waiting on one ordered bus. MMT and Peoplerides FY 2010 applications for capital assistance are still pending. The federal requests are \$584,320 and \$199,200 respectively. This funding would assist with replacing 2 MMT buses and 4 Peoplerides buses and minivans. There will continue to be large public transit and possibly some of the private passenger transportation capital replacement needs. Region 6 currently has \$108,800 of regional Surface Transportation Program funds to replace 2 older busses.
- **Peoplerides Administrative Office.** Due to air quality and health issues in the office space leased in the Public Works Building from the City of Marshalltown, in 2007 the Region 6 Planning Board recommended that Region 6 pursue new building construction at an alternate location. This facility was funded through several grants, loans and local funds. It continues to serve our administrative needs.

One of the needs identified at the Spring 2006 Mobility Action Planning workshop was transit marketing for Peoplerides. If we are successful at completing the service changes and expansions discussed in this plan, it will be highly important that we have sufficient resources for marketing. This has been a funding gap that remains unfilled. While we largely depend upon “word of mouth” and vehicles on the street for marketing our services, we are continually

looking for ways to improve communication of our transit services to the caregivers, health and human services agencies, and the general public. Region 6 has published quarterly newsletters and one special edition for the 35th anniversary celebration and visioning sessions that occurred in each of the four counties in September and October, 2009.

Peoplerides ridership in FY 2009 was 53,488 rides, which is 6% more riders than in 2008, and 16% more riders than in 2007. Peoplerides continues to strive for improved service to meet regional transit needs.

The regional transit system also will continue to look at new markets for the increasing percentage of elderly in the Region's population and the potential for commuter routes to out-of-region employment centers. Funds for new vehicles will be sought through the conventional Section 5311 and Section 5309 funds prior to seeking any Surface Transportation Program funds. Other funding sources include, but are not limited to, the Federal Transportation Administration's Job Access/Reverse Commute, New Freedom or Special Needs programs.

3. Other Recent Developments

The economic downturn of the last few years, with plant and business closings or reduction in workforce, has increased the needs for public transit, especially to jobs outside the city or county of residence. Traer Manufacturing (Tama County) began downsizing in 2007 and completely closed in 2008, and it is uncertain what, if anything, will replace those lost manufacturing jobs. Lennox Industries in Marshalltown (Marshall County) appears to be strong, but is always vulnerable to plant closing or downsizing during tough economic times. All four counties have experienced business closings and/or job layoffs during the recent recession. The regional economy is also affected by issues of other nearby regions and of the state of Iowa as a whole. Although located in neighboring Jasper County, the 2007 Maytag corporate and plant closings in Newton has had a considerable negative impact on the Region's economy. The probable loss of IowaTelecom in Newton will further exacerbate an already shifting of commuting patterns, individual and household economies, and transportation needs.

The poor economic conditions have caused a substantial negative impact from lack of funding availability for new or existing transit programs, particularly for the poor and the elderly who need these services at affordable rates now more than ever.

4. Service Needs

The additional service needs are based upon input at 4 county-level Region 6 Planning Commission 35th Anniversary celebration events, a www.surveymonkey.com survey that was distributed to over 150 potential respondents, including Marshalltown Municipal Transit and Peoplerides driver and staff input. The additional service needs have not been constrained by funding availability.

Iowa Statewide Passenger Transportation Funding Study

The Iowa Statewide Passenger Transportation Funding Study included numerous surveys and public input meetings. Applicable information from the study commissioned by the Iowa Legislature is summarized below.

The purpose of the Study was to address the following issues:

- Determine how much revenue is currently available to provide passenger transportation service.
- Determine if the current level of revenue is adequate to support passenger transportation service needs.
- How well the current public transit network in the urban and rural areas supports the current and expanding mobility needs of the state's senior population.
- How well the passenger transportation supports the state's goals for independence from foreign fossil fuels and how that support could be improved.

Current funding sources for public transit include:

- \$100 million from federal, state and local sources.
- \$31.4 million from local sources including property tax levies, fare box, contract transportation service, and advertising on vehicles.

The Study's common passenger transportation goals include:

- Provide passenger transportation service throughout the state that is convenient, accessible, affordable, safe and secure.
- Provide passenger transportation service that is focused on the future by coordinating land use and transportation, incorporating efficiency-building 21st century technology, utilizing alternative sources of power, and being a part of the statewide energy independent and environmentally conscious solution.

The Study supports creating a passenger transportation system that will:

- Provide travel times that are competitive with private automobile travel.
- Promote the use of transit systems, vanpools, and carpools to a broader percentage of the state's population through pricing, education, and incentives, and by influencing change in personal preferences.

Over the next 20 years the population of the state that is 65 years old or greater is expected to increase more than any other age group. Mobility provided through public transit is generally considered to be one of the key services that enhance a senior's quality of life (Harris Interactive poll for the American Public Transit Association – November 2005). A key Study question is whether the mobility needs of Iowa's growing senior population are being met through current transportation services.

Mobility is a significant influencing factor to our overall quality of life. Having convenient services is critical.

- Transportation accounts for 26% of Iowa's energy consumption.
- Using passenger transportation reduces fuel consumption

- Reducing use through transit is encouraged.
- 17% of the greenhouses gasses in Iowa are associated with the transportation sector.
- Increasing use of passenger transportation services reduces greenhouse gas and criteria air pollutant emissions.

Reducing fuel consumption would have a positive impact on the state's economy. Reducing fuel demand traditionally has resulted in lower prices. At the high level of fuel prices in the last few years, the economy is less capable of absorbing volatile changes in price.

Some mobility facts that are related to the transit deficiencies:

- Currently 11% of Medicaid patients miss medical appointments due to unreliable transportation, which equals 33,000 missed medical appointments a year.
- Seniors will be Iowa's largest population group in 2028.
- 79% of Iowan's drive to work alone.

Suggested service expansion alternatives to support unmet demand:

- Increase the frequency of fixed route service throughout the entire service day and during peak hours of service. One trip every 30 minutes is recommended; every 15 minutes would be preferred.
- Add to the daily hours of service by starting earlier and/or ending later.
- Extend the geographical service area into unserved portions of the community.
- Increase fixed route service areas.
- Provide services over more days of the week.
- Increase the number of trips made in a day to include more regional services. The number of trips provided each day will need to increase by 90% in order to address the small town and rural baseline demand-to-ridership gap.
- Increase the level of Saturday and/or Sunday service on fixed route systems.
- Initiate or add inter-city and inter-regional transit service, such as trips between rural places and regional medical centers, and commuter services between urban areas to where it is needed.

Conclusions:

- Current funding sources are neither adequate to support the level of service needed to address the mobility needs of Iowa's seniors nor sufficient to provide passenger transportation services that will support energy independence goals.
- Transportation was listed as an unmet need in approximately 15% of the documented unmet needs for seniors and over 14% of those documented for frail elders.
- Many residents rely upon very expensive nursing home services, in part, because of a lack of transportation opportunities for non-emergency medical and other services from their own homes.
- More transportation services would improve the quality of life for the 334,000 Iowans living below the poverty line. Expanded passenger transportation service would allow lower income Iowans to access jobs while lowering their transportation costs.

Hardin County Service Enhancements

Establishing a ride-to-work type coordination service is at least a countywide need. Many people commute between Iowa Falls and Eldora, Ackley and Iowa Falls, the Hubbard/Radcliffe area and Ames, and to and from other locations. Region 6 should do a study to determine the level of interest in a vanpool, carpool coordination, or public transit routes for any of these or other possible destinations. There are clearly many single person occupied vehicles on the road going both directions during the morning and afternoon commute. Opportunities to move some of these people with a shared arrangement -- carpool, vanpool, or commuter route -- would benefit the region and the state.

Peoplerides currently operates on-demand service from Hardin County to Ames and Marshalltown. The demand response rate is currently \$21/ride (\$42 round trip). Hardin County, from the general fund, provides \$23/ride (\$46 round trip) of subsidy for these trips. Peoplerides provided 379 of these rides in FY 2009. The estimated cost for each ride was \$66, or a total of \$25,000. The county provides \$8,700 for these rides and Region 6 provides \$8,000. What alternate services could be provided with these 700 annual hours and \$16,700 of revenues? Could we offer different services that would increase ridership from 379 to 1,500 or more riders?

Similarly, Peoplerides currently operates demand service within Hardin County for medical appointments. The demand response rate is currently \$13/ride (\$26 round trip). Hardin County, from the general fund, provides \$14/ride (\$28 round trip) for these trips. Peoplerides provided 962 rides in FY 2009. The estimated cost of each ride was \$26, or a total of \$25,000. The county provides about \$10,000 for these rides and Region 6 provides \$9,900. Again what alternate services could be provided with these 700 annual hours and nearly \$20,000 of revenues? Could we offer different services and increase ridership from 962 to 4,000 or more riders?

The nursing homes are obligated to provide residents with transportation service. Peoplerides is the transportation of last resort. In Hardin County, 75% of the medical rides that we provide are from nursing homes around the county, and the other riders have no other forms of transportation. Peoplerides is devoting many resources for these rides.

There is an opportunity in Hardin County to reconsider how \$36,700 of Hardin County and Peoplerides revenues and 1,400 hours are spent on services offered to residents of the County. Some alternate options for discussion include:

- Offer 1 day per week service from Hardin County to Ames for \$10 round trip. The market would include senior shopping, medical, and social trips. Target = 5 hours/week.
- Offer 3-4 days per week of service within the county on a predetermined schedule. E.g., Monday in the NW area, Tuesday the NE area, Wednesday the SW area, and Thursday the SE area. Target = Rides offered at \$3/ride.
- Evaluate ridership needs of the Hardin County CPC clients and Hardin County general relief clients. This activity is currently underway. Finding a group of riders with similar transportation needs is a key factor of redesigning the system.

The Iowa Statewide Passenger Transportation Funding Study recommends a 90% increase in the number of trips that we offer to passengers. This would make transportation within each county more available for seniors and disabled. A 90% increase equals about 4,500 additional service hours. Some possible services that could be offered include:

- Daily work route from Iowa Falls to Eldora and return at peak commute times.
- Daily work route from southeastern Hardin County to Marshalltown at peak commute times.
- Route service to each place within the county at least one day per week.
- Two days per week of service in Eldora and Ackley.
- Daily route to Waterloo with special focus on education trips.
- Transportation to the dialysis center at peak times 3 times per week.

Most of these services will not be possible without increased funding from state sources.

Peoplerides currently offers rides within Iowa Falls from 9 am to 3 pm, Monday through Friday. The cost per ride is \$3.25 for elderly/disabled, and the cost per ride is \$4.25 for the general public. At our public input sessions and in the survey responses, the cost per ride was a primary concern. While the recommended amount varied, the general consensus was that the cost per ride needs to be reduced. Based upon the above-referenced information, it is recommended that the cost be targeted to the \$2/ride range. The ability to do this will depend largely upon local financial support.

A need was also expressed to offer service in the evenings in Iowa Falls. The degree of demand is unknown. Some interest was also expressed in offering transportation services on Saturday and for Sunday morning church services in Iowa Falls. There are no private taxi operators in Iowa Falls with which to contract that type of service.

Historically Peoplerides has heard of interest in public transit services in Eldora. Peoplerides has tried to market this in the past, but few people contacted us for rides. Due to the low demand, Peoplerides had to discontinue this service.

Peoplerides route prices are \$8.50/ride for rides from the north quarter of the county to Hampton, and \$14.55/ride for rides from the southeast quarter of the county to Marshalltown. The cost for general public rides needs to be reduced to the \$3/ride level for rides within the county and \$5/ride to Marshalltown. The rides are at the current levels because of funding composition. Changing the rural medical demand response system will be necessary to achieve the lower levels. Some local subsidy will need to be shifted to reduce the cost for route rides from the rural medical demand response service.

Peoplerides is committing too many resources for too few rides. If we have some common core services, the rural medical demand response-related rides could be placed on the core routes at least one way. We offer daily service from the north quarter of the county to Hampton and the south quarter of the county to Marshalltown. Peoplerides is currently evaluating what additional core services could be possible to offer in the county. We need to find some complementary services that need rides. These services would serve as a backbone for our sporadic medical

demand rides. The additional services might address transportation needs for mentally retarded, chronically mentally ill, or very low income clients.

Coordinating a special education related route from Hardin County school systems to the Waterloo area appears to be a need. Hubbard, Iowa Falls, Eldora, and Ackley Schools are all currently sending vehicles to special education centers in Waterloo. Coordinating this would reduce their costs and increase opportunities for others.

Marketing Peoplerides services continues to be a need throughout the county. When we find the right mix of services to offer at the right prices, we need to begin a marketing campaign. Currently there is no funding available to do a large promotional type effort, and funding will need to be identified for this activity.

Marshall County Service Enhancements

Establishing a ride-to-work type coordination service is at least a countywide need. Many people commute between Ames and Marshalltown and points in between, and between Tama and Marshalltown and points between. There are clearly many single person occupied vehicles on the road both directions during the morning and afternoon commutes. There should be some opportunity to move some of the people with a shared arrangement. Determining the market is step one. Region 6 should do a study to determine the interest in a vanpool, carpool coordination, or public transit routes for any of these or other possible destinations.

The Iowa Statewide Passenger Transportation Funding Study recommends a 90% increase in the number of trips that we offer to passengers. This would make transportation within each county more available for seniors and disabled. A 90% increase is about a 4,500 increase in service hours. Some possible services that could be offered include:

- Daily work route from Marshalltown to Ames, Marshalltown to Tama/Toledo, and return, at peak commute times.
- Daily route service to Waterloo, with special focus placed on special education services; coordinate the route with Tama County.
- Route service to Des Moines and Ames at least one day per week.
- At least one day of service at low cost to each place within the county.
- Transportation to the dialysis center at peak times 3 times per week.

Most of these services will not be possible without increased funding from state sources.

Many people have long expressed a need to get to medical appointments in the Ames and Des Moines areas from Marshalltown. If Peoplerides could offer once per week service to Ames and Des Moines, potentially on the same day, that would help meet this medical need. The challenge will be to find sufficient demand and funding for vehicles running these distances.

We have rural routes into Marshalltown multiple times each day. The route prices are \$8.50/ride (\$17 round trip). Just like in the other counties, the transit ride should be available at or near \$3/ride. It would take some local public financial support to reduce the general public rate to that level. Currently Peoplerides does not get any public funding for general public riders in

Marshall County. Reducing the cost for the general public while retaining the high cost on Medicaid paid rides does not comply with Medicaid rules and is not an option.

Coordinating a Marshall-Tama special education route to Waterloo is a recognized need. Marshalltown, LeGrand, Gladbrook, Garwin, and Traer all have special education buses that go to Waterloo. If there were a coordinated effort, it would save school system funds while increasing the public transit opportunities for others.

Peoplerides route prices are \$8.50/ride from rural areas of the county to Marshalltown. All rides are at these levels due to our funding composition. The cost for general public rides needs to be reduced to the \$3/ride level for rides within the county, which would require increased public support. Peoplerides does not get any public support for general public rides. There are 3 times each morning where people from rural places could get into Marshalltown. Our current rate levels do not attract riders to fill empty seats, which keeps the rates expensive for everyone.

Marshalltown Service Enhancements

Service additions are needed in Marshalltown to help meet local needs and achieve the Iowa Statewide Passenger Funding Study recommendations. While the following discussion identifies the needed enhancements, it does not attempt to be financially constrained. The actual budgets included may differ from the chart contained in the Recommendations section.

Marshalltown Municipal Transit has offered Saturday city bus service in Marshalltown on and off for many years. While currently this service is not being offered, it appears that there is still a local need. Recently there has been some discussion about providing this service again.

Assisting people, especially disabled, to get to Sunday church services has been identified as a community-wide need. Some community churches do have vehicles for this purpose. However, none of the vehicles are accessible for disabled, and they only assist members of their own congregations.

Some lower income and disabled people work after city bus operating hours end. People can get to their jobs before the buses stop operating, but have difficulty getting back to their residence. Offering a discount voucher for the two private taxi operators would be a way to address this problem.

The City currently has two buses operating on four routes. For some locations it takes about one hour to get to a destination, while driving one's own vehicle takes only 10 minutes. The City would like to reduce travel times to make riding the bus a more attractive or feasible alternative. This would require many additional vehicles.

At peak travel times to work and during the lunch hour, the streets are filled with single occupancy vehicles. Express routes would limit the number of vehicles on streets and assist in reducing travel times during the peak hours. These routes could serve the major employers and commercial locations. It would be important for employees to be able to get to and from their destinations quickly and with minimal stops.

There are many single occupant vehicles encircling the schools at drop of and pick up times. MMT could assist with reducing traffic congestion around schools by offering more bus routes. These routes would need to serve the community and be quick routes. Additional vehicles would be needed to support this service.

A mobile repair vehicle is needed for MMT. This is especially needed with older vehicles and at locations where traffic is already a problem. Currently if a tire blows, it takes quite some time for the vehicle to be repaired and put back in service.

MMT does not have any GPS equipment and displays for the buses or dispatchers. GPS capability would be useful for system efficiency, and especially helpful for the dispatchers to know the precise location of vehicles for people inquiring “where’s the bus.”

If behaviors and economics change where people rely upon public transit to get from rural locations to Marshalltown, some park-and-ride lots may be needed. A possible location for such a facility would be in downtown Marshalltown. That location would serve commuter towns to the north. These commuters could then ride on the bus to desired locations throughout the day. Another facility may be needed to the south. It may be feasible to use current large parking lots for this activity, such as the ones at Iowa Valley Community College or Marshall Town Center shopping mall.

MICA Headstart does not offer transportation in Marshalltown to the Marshalltown Headstart center. Reportedly families can get kids to the center either individually or with an informal carpool arrangement. It may be beneficial to have a route to serve these needs, especially if fuel prices increase substantially.

Poweshiek County Service Enhancements

Establishing a ride-to-work type coordination service is at least a countywide need. Many people commute between Grinnell and Newton, Montezuma and Grinnell, and Brooklyn and Grinnell and points between. Region 6 should do a study to determine the interest in a vanpool, carpool coordination, or public transit routes for any of these or other possible destinations. There are clearly many single person occupied vehicles on the road both directions during the morning and afternoon commutes. There should be an opportunity to move some of the people with a shared arrangement.

There is some need to offer a race day shuttle to the Iowa Speedway in Newton from places in Region 6. The primary point of regional interest is from Grinnell hotels. This would be a nice service for both spectators and race crews.

Peoplerides currently offers demand response public transit service in Grinnell from 8:30 to 3:30, Monday – Friday. There is a community need for services beyond that time. While Grinnell has a local taxi operator, he has little interest in increasing his scope of service, responsibilities, or time. The likely demand after 3:30 pm would not be enough to support the additional hours. In order for Peoplerides to offer additional services after 3:30 p.m., local financial support would need to be obtained.

Grinnell is home to Grinnell College. Many college students do not have cars. Peoplerides needs to study closely the transit needs at the college. Peoplerides offers a daily route from the college area to Wal-Mart for \$1.00 per trip at one time per day. This route picks up students and general public passengers at noon at a point near the college campus to go to Wal-Mart. The return route picks up passengers at approximately 1:15 pm for the trip back to campus.

There is one established route to bring people into Grinnell in the morning and again in the mid-afternoon. The cost per ride is \$8.50 each way on this route. The price for each ride needs to be in the \$3/ride range. That would require some public support to reduce the rate levels. Currenly there are no financially-supported services in the mid-day. There is also a need to provide some services to the outlying communities, especially Montezuma and Brooklyn.

The Iowa Statewide Passenger Transportation Funding Study recommends a 90% increase in the number of trips that we offer to passengers. This would make transportation within each county more available for seniors and disabled. A 90% increase is about a 4,500 increase in service hours. Some possible services that would be offered include:

- Expand service hours in Grinnell from 8:30 am to 4 pm Monday–Friday, to 7 am to 6 pm Monday–Saturday.
- Daily work route from Brooklyn and Montezuma to Grinnell and return at peak commute times.
- 1-2 days per week of route service from points in the county to Iowa City and Des Moines.
- Route service to each place within the county at least one day per week.
- 1-2 days per week of service in Montezuma and Brooklyn.

Most of these services will not be possible without increased funding from state sources.

Tama County Service Enhancements

Establishing a ride-to-work type coordination service is at least a countywide need. Many people commute between Tama and Cedar Rapids and points in between, Tama and Marshalltown and points between, and North Tama County to the Waterloo area. Region 6 should do a study to determine the interest in a vanpool, carpool coordination, or public transit routes for any of these or other possible destinations. There are many single person occupied vehicles on the road both directions during the morning and afternoon commutes. There should be opportunities to move some of the people with a shared arrangement.

Peoplerides offers demand response services that are limited to Wednesday morning in Tama-Toledo. It would be good to expand that service to include an additional day, evening, Saturday, and potentially Sunday morning for church services.

Better linkages from South Tama County to Marshalltown and North Tama County to Waterloo are needed.

Most of the county school systems currently are sending separate vehicles to Waterloo. Coordination of school special education transportation with Marshall County is needed and presents a countywide opportunity.

Peoplerides route prices are \$8.50/ride for rides from rural areas of Tama County to Tama-Toledo. All rides are at these levels due to our funding composition. The cost for general public rides needs to be reduced to the \$3/ride level for rides within the county, which would require increased public support. Peoplerides does not get any public support for general public rides. There are 3 times each morning where people from rural places could get into Tama-Toledo. Our current rate levels do not attract riders to fill empty seats, which keeps the rates expensive for everyone. Public support would need to be shifted from rural medical demand response service to make this work.

Tama County provides annual support for rural demand response medical rides. Peoplerides and Tama County provide \$33,200 of support to offer about 1,500 rides across approximately 1,200-1,300 hours. The cost per each ride is about \$26.

- **Rides within County:** The demand response rate is currently \$13/ride (\$26 round trip). Tama County, from the general fund, provides \$14/ride (\$28 round trip) for these trips.
- **Rides from Tama County to Grinnell, Marshalltown, and Waterloo/Cedar Falls:** The demand response rate is currently \$21/ride (\$42 round trip). Tama County, from the general fund, provides \$23/ride (\$46 round trip) of subsidy for these trips. Peoplerides is currently evaluating this service to determine if changes could be made that would expand public transit availability to additional people. E.g., could the 23 hours per week of service be changed to where 3-4 times more people could be served and still assist people getting to medical appointments?

Some changes are being evaluated somewhat concurrently with the Hardin County service questions:

- Offer a route to Waterloo 1-2 days per week for shopping or medical appointments for a nominal price (e.g., \$5/ride versus the current \$21/ride).
- Offer a route from the Tama-Toledo area to Marshalltown later in the day 2-3 days per week for a nominal price (e.g., \$5/ride versus the current \$13/ride).

The Iowa Statewide Passenger Transportation Funding Study recommends a 90% increase in the number of trips that we offer to passengers. This would make transportation within each county more available for seniors and disabled. A 90% increase is about a 4,500 increase in service hours. Some possible services that would be offered include:

- Daily work route from Traer and Dysart to Waterloo and return at peak times.
- Daily work route from Tama/Toledo to Marshalltown and return at peak times.
- 1-2 days per week of route service from the county to Iowa City, Cedar Rapids, and Waterloo.
- Route service to each place within the county at least one day per week.
- 1 additional day of service per week in Tama/Toledo.

Most of these services will not be possible without increased funding from state sources.

5. Management Needs

Peoplerides -

One of the top issues is the need to obtain a more sophisticated accounting software package that can more accurately compare budgets against expenditures without substantial work. Peoplerides is evaluating that software currently.

Peoplerides currently outsources payroll. There is some interest of bringing that function in house with the right personnel composition. This issue may be tied somewhat to budget tracking needs aforementioned.

It would be beneficial to have GPS units on the vehicles with a display unit near dispatchers so that we can tell passengers if vehicles are running late.

It would be helpful to have cameras in the vehicles to monitor both drivers and passengers. This would provide more objective data on any problems or issues when they arise.

An in-house fleet mechanic continues to be a pressing need for Peoplerides. While the private shops that do work for us do quality repairs, the concern is more related to risk management. Problems that could be averted with routine maintenance between repairs may not be caught by the private shops during intermittent repair work. If Peoplerides starts doing any school transportation too, it will be necessary to have a mechanic that can perform regular inspections as well as repair vehicles.

Marketing continues to be a significant need. The Peoplerides brochure needs to be updated. We need to get information out more effectively and be more creative in order to build ridership and offer more services. Staff is somewhat limited in time and expertise to the day-to-day operational tasks.

A ride coordinator position would be beneficial for the region. The challenges are huge with the public school and veterans programs. If something could be coordinated, transportation opportunities would increase substantially.

A carpool or vanpool program would appear to be beneficial for the region. Management or coordination would be needed for such a program. Software would be critical to making this work.

Marshalltown Municipal Transit –

MMT has a part-time dispatcher. When drivers are ill, this person spends a good amount of time out driving vehicles. A full-time dispatcher is required to provide better service.

MMT's only mechanic will be retiring in the next few years. Many times MMT needs two mechanics to keep up on the equipment maintenance and repairs. At the least, it would be beneficial to hire a second mechanic now to train on the specialized transit equipment.

GPS equipment is needed on vehicles. MMT would like the ability to have real time bus data for dispatchers. This data could be monitored for schedule and route compliance.

Procuring a mobile repair unit for vehicles would be a good addition. Currently when buses get a flat tire or any mechanical problems, it takes too long to obtain equipment to fix the problem. Sometimes vehicles are in a bad location while being broken down. Having equipment available to fix tires and other fairly simple maintenance issues would be good to have in a small truck or bus.

Other Providers –

Having some linkage between systems is needed. This would be especially true for long distance public school special education routes, Iowa Veterans Home, and Hawkeye Valley Area Agency on Aging volunteer routes. Having a route coordinator for a large area would be advantageous. For example, if IVH has an open seat on a vehicle, that seat could be filled by another agency, if the process would not be complicated for IVH. Finding a non-complicated solution for the number of vehicles that they have could be a challenge.

The small district school transportation functions are run by the superintendents. They do not have time to devote to pursuing transportation coordination opportunities.

6. Fleet Needs

Peoplerides & MMT -

The list of fleet replacement needs of the public transit systems is attached **Region 6 Passenger Transportation Plan Recommended (Priority) Projects**. The needs for FY 2011 include a backlog of previous unmet needs. Funding is not projected to be available in 2011 for all these projects, so the projects will be delayed until later years which may “bump” some of those projects.

The annual capital replacement need for Peoplerides over the next five years is \$287,000 per year. The actual funding will likely be limited to be about 35% of that sum. Peoplerides is dependent upon statewide transit earmarks for capital replacements. Those earmarks are unpredictable and the funding amounts are uncertain.

MMT has an old vehicle fleet. MMT needs to replace 5 old heavy duty buses. This would take care of the vehicle replacement needs for the next 5 years and beyond, at current service levels. This vehicle replacement need is \$1.6 million.

If many new services discussed previously in this PTP are offered, both MMT and Peoplerides would need even more additional vehicles. Grant funding would be needed from some source to cover the cost of these additional vehicles. Furthermore, it takes 9-24 months to get a new vehicle into service once a funding agreement/contract has been issued.

Other Providers –

Cabs of Marshalltown, Sureway Cab in Marshalltown, and Jewel Cab in Grinnell use non-accessible minivans or sedans. These private provider vehicles are not accessible for people who use mobility aids.

Four of the 15 public school systems in the region do not have lift accessible vehicles. The districts without lift accessible vehicles include Montezuma, BGM, North Tama, and Gladbrook-Reinbeck. Seven of the other districts use lifts on a regular basis. Those schools include Eldora-New Providence, AGWSR, South Tama, Grinnell, Marshalltown, West Marshall, and East Marshall. Those districts use the lifts at least 4 times per day. AGWSR and Marshalltown have the highest numbers.

Peoplerides has fully accessible vehicles throughout the region. Peoplerides has limited spare capacity to assist some of the school systems.

The Iowa Veterans Home has a variety of equipment. Most of their newer equipment is accessible buses. The older equipment includes station wagon sedans.

Marshall and Tama County Veterans Affairs have non-accessible minivans. They transport veterans in those vehicles to VA centers for medical appointments. Peoplerides services are available for veterans for transportation as needed, but they have not contacted Peoplerides or MMT for any transportation needs for disabled veterans.

7. Facility needs

Peoplerides –

Peoplerides needs more facilities for buses. Currently three or four vehicles are stored inside the Marshalltown Municipal Transit facility. The other six or seven Marshalltown area Peoplerides buses are stored outside. Three or four vehicles in Iowa Falls and Grinnell are stored outside. One or two vehicles in Tama and usually only one vehicle in Dysart are stored outside. In all locations it would be very beneficial to have vehicles stored inside, especially during the cold months. Peoplerides has discussed sharing options with cities, non-profits, businesses, and counties, most of which require high levels of compensation that Peoplerides cannot afford. If the state funding were to increase substantially so that we could increase services to help meet the statewide transit needs, more vehicles would be needed and storage needs would also substantially increase. The highest priority storage locations initially are Marshalltown and Grinnell.

MMT –

The current fleet needs are being met at the Marshalltown Municipal Transit facility. If the fleet were to expand substantially, a larger building would be needed.

MMT needs a better main transfer point bus shelter. During one peak time every day the bus shelter at the Community Center is substantially overcrowded. Additionally, the Community

Center contains natural art, an over story of trees, brick buildings, and green space. The standard shelter adds nothing to the sense of place of that location. The current metal and glass enclosure does not match the quality of the other surrounding buildings. A new shelter at that location should be a brick enclosure that would match the Community Center built environment. If the number of routes were to increase substantially to meet the needs in the statewide study, some changes might be needed at the central transfer point.

Other Providers –

Greyhound has a “station” at the truck stop located on the outskirts of Marshalltown on the corner of 18th Avenue and Iowa Avenue. This location is not easily accessible to the rest of Marshalltown. It likely would be necessary to take a taxi to that location because the city bus routes do not go there.

8. *Summary*

Clearly, there are a substantial number of unmet needs that have been identified by Mobility Action Plan (MAP) brainstorming and by Transportation Action Group (TAG) member participation since the spring of 2006. Needs have been identified and prioritized; new funding sources have been researched; coordination efforts have been reviewed, all with an eye toward creating greater efficiency and providing increased transit service to more clients.

The most pressing need in the near term is continuation of current passenger transportation services, especially during a recession. Transit has been underfunded at all levels for many years. Local governments are struggling to provide the level of services an aging population requires. New sources of funds will continue to be needed to provide all essential services, including public transit.

Public transportation is critical to a large portion of the rural population. The greatest need is for those who are unable to drive or unable to afford to own and operate their own vehicle. Reducing vehicle miles traveled is a desired strategy in all parts of the country in order to address global climate issues as well as local economic and transportation safety issues. However, in order for public transit to play a key role, funding will need to change at all levels.

SECTION FOUR: Funding

Peoplerides –

Region 6/Peoplerides bases its project goals on anticipated funding. All projects prioritized in this document are long-term (5 year) goals and are dependent upon the continued availability of funding at the current levels.

The projected annual operating cost for Peoplerides in FY 2011 is approximately \$700,000. The region will be dependent upon the State Transit Assistance and Federal Transit Administration operating assistance to continue services. Five-year annual estimates for those sources are \$190,644 and \$152,131, respectively. The state and federal grants are estimated to cover about 49% of the operating expenditures.

The region will be requesting FTA New Freedom funds to continue the weekly regional service to Iowa City medical clinics. That service is estimated to cost \$17,000 and the passenger revenues are estimated at \$1,400. Region 6 Planning Commission will cover the 50% local match with state transit assistance funds. Each year, FTA New Freedom funds in the approximate amount of \$7,800 will be needed to continue this service.

Peoplerides would like to expand hours across the region. Any expansion of services or hours of service would require a local cash contribution. The challenge is, and will continue to be at least over the next five years, the limited revenues of local governments. Even if state and federal transit grants are available, a local match will be very difficult to secure. With an FTA New Freedom or Job Access Grant and with an Iowa State Transit Coordination grant, the local match would be 20-30%.

Peoplerides would like to provide lower cost rides across the region. Again, while this type of project would qualify for FTA New Freedom and Iowa State Coordination grants, the local financial support needed to pursue these funding sources would be a real challenge to obtain.

Peoplerides will also need funding to replace capital equipment over the next five years.

MMT –

The projected annual operating cost for MMT in FY 2011 is approximately \$470,000. MMT will be dependent upon the State Transit Assistance and Federal Transit Administration operating assistance to continue services. Those estimates are \$151,217 and \$154,930 respectively. The state and federal grants are estimated to cover about 65% of the operating expenditures. MMT would like to expand public transit availability by offering Saturday and evening service. There is no local match available for expanded hours. MMT also will need to replace older worn-out vehicles over the next five years.

Other Providers -

Other providers' services are funded by the government programs or private entities that they are organized under. Many of the private providers are happy to continue what they currently offer to their own clients, but they do not desire to provide services like the public systems do.

Estimated Funding by Source from 2011 to 2015 -

The estimated funding by source over the next five years is listed in the attached spreadsheet entitled **Region 6 Passenger Transportation Plan Estimated Funding by Source**. Funding sources are also included in the attached **Region 6 Passenger Transportation Plan Recommended (Priority) Projects**. Many of these funding totals could change. The operating assumptions are largely based upon FY 2009 year end totals, so the operating costs also could change significantly over the next five years.

SECTION FIVE: Recommended Projects

Region 6 Planning Commission/Peoplerides has proactively solicited input for this Passenger Transportation Plan. Based upon observations from that input, from historical data, and the Iowa Passenger Transportation Funding Study, a “wish list” of potential projects has been developed. These projects are outlined in the attached spreadsheet (**Region 6 Passenger Transportation Plan Potential Projects**). These projects have not been constrained by funding availability or current public transit services.

The transportation sector in 2007 consumed 26% of Iowa’s energy. The transportation sector in 2005 accounted for 17% of greenhouse gas emissions. Autos/light trucks account for 67% of the transportation sector greenhouse gas emissions. If the state and region are going to get serious about reducing private automobile use, the effects of global warming, and dependence on foreign fuel purchasing, then transit availability will need to increase.

Transit routes have generally been designed to serve the transportation needs of some disabled groups. The routes have not been designed to serve the general public or major work sites. In order to have an impact upon energy consumption, public transit, especially regional transit, will need to change from a service primarily for disabled and elderly people to a mode that serves the broad general public. That will require a major passenger transportation investment at all levels.

In order to attract riders, public transit services will need to be attractively priced, comfortable, conveniently accessible, and readily available. Attitudes and economics also will need to change to attract riders. Having the best system still may not attract riders if the cost of using a personal car is perceived as being reasonable or if the environmental damage is not recognized as being significant.

Many of the transportation recommendations discussed in the Potential Projects spreadsheet are not feasible, particularly given the current economic conditions. The feasibility of these projects, as well as the projects themselves, could change over the next five years. Likewise some of the potential projects could be bumped up to the Priorities list over the course of the five-year PTP. Moreover, all the projects listed are early cost estimates that could substantially change. Before many of these projects can be feasible, personal behaviors and attitudes that affect ridership will need to change, as well as priorities affecting funding decisions of local governments and citizens across the region.

The goals that currently appear to be most feasible, and possibly most needed, over the next five years are discussed below, and reflect the projects that are detailed in the attached spreadsheet **Region 6 Passenger Transportation Plan Recommended (Priority) Projects**.

Peoplerides --

- **Start Regional Vanpool Program:** Conduct industry visits and surveys and determine interest in initial year. Assuming that there is interest start a regional Peoplerides vanpool program. (*Projects 1, 3, 4*)

- **Acquire Ride Coordinator:** A staff person who would coordinate rides and available transit services would help make more efficient use of all transportation services offered throughout the area. *(Project 2)*
- **Continue Iowa City Medical Route:** FTA New Freedom funds are needed to continue this bus route to Iowa City. This service is supported by Region 6 Planning – Peoplerides State Transit Assistance. Without the New Freedom funds this project will be eliminated. The current passenger fare is \$38 per ride. Most of the passengers are Medicaid recipients. Many are disabled. All are lower income. *(Project 23)*.
- **Continue Operating Assistance for Public Transit:** The state and federal transit operating assistance must be able to continue services, at least at the current levels. *(Project 5)*
- **Acquire fuel efficient staff vehicle:** Peoplerides does not have a staff vehicle. Getting a fuel efficient vehicle with some attractive graphics to help market services would be a good administrative change. *(Project 6)*
- **Replace current transit equipment:** Current public transit fleets are old and high mileage and need to be replaced. There will be future vehicles that also need replacement. Serving the public requires good vehicles. *(Project 7)*
- **Coordinated transportation routes from region to Waterloo:** Hardin, Marshall, and Tama public school programs have special education vehicles that go to the AEA 267 special education school in Waterloo. Coordinating that service and adding more general public opportunities would be a good service improvement. *(Projects 8, 11)*
- **Reduce Peoplerides Iowa Falls prices:** In Grinnell Peoplerides has record ridership, at least partially due to the City's support. All rides in Grinnell are \$2 per ride. Some very low income people qualify for up to 15 free rides per month. This change has doubled ridership over the last decade. We would like to duplicate this success in Iowa Falls. *(Project 9)*
- **Reduce Peoplerides route prices:** Route prices are not subsidized by local sources. This causes rates to be unattractive for incidental general public usage. *(Projects 9, 10, 12, 20, 22)*
- **Weekend bus service to Iowa Speedway in Newton:** There are many hotels, especially in Grinnell, that serve the racetrack. Parking at the speedway is expensive and a hassle. Several people have suggested that Peoplerides start a new shuttle service. *(Project 18)*
- **Expand Grinnell Peoplerides Hours:** Grinnell has record ridership. Peoplerides feels that there is some demand that is not being met through 8:30 am to 4 pm service, Monday – Friday. After hours service would be a good addition. *(Project 19)*
- **Peoplerides bus storage in Marshall & Poweshiek Counties:** Peoplerides has about 9 vehicles in Marshalltown and 4-5 vehicles in Grinnell. Only 3-4 vehicles are parked inside in Marshalltown. The other vehicles are parked outside. This is a special challenge in the winter when the vehicles are covered with snow and ice. *(Projects 13, 21)*

MMT –

- **Continue Operating Assistance for Public Transit:** The state and federal transit operating assistance must be able to continue services, at least at the current levels. *(Project 14)*

- **Provide Saturday bus service in Marshalltown:** Marshalltown has had Saturday bus service on and off for the last 20 years. Expanding this service would assist disabled people get to work and would improve their quality of life. (*Project 15*)
- **Replace current transit equipment:** Current public transit fleets are old and high mileage and need to be replaced. There will be future vehicles that also need replacement. Serving the public requires good vehicles. (*Project 16*)
- **Acquire GPS equipment for Marshalltown Transit:** This would assist dispatchers with knowing the precise location of vehicles. Also, if a vehicle breaks down then the precise location is known. (*Project 17*)

The operating expenditures listed above (and detailed on the attached Priority Projects spreadsheet) total \$8,161,000 -- \$6,217,500 is for the continuation of current programs, and \$1,943,500 is for the expansion of regional passenger transportation services. These are the additional services needed to achieve the plan goals.

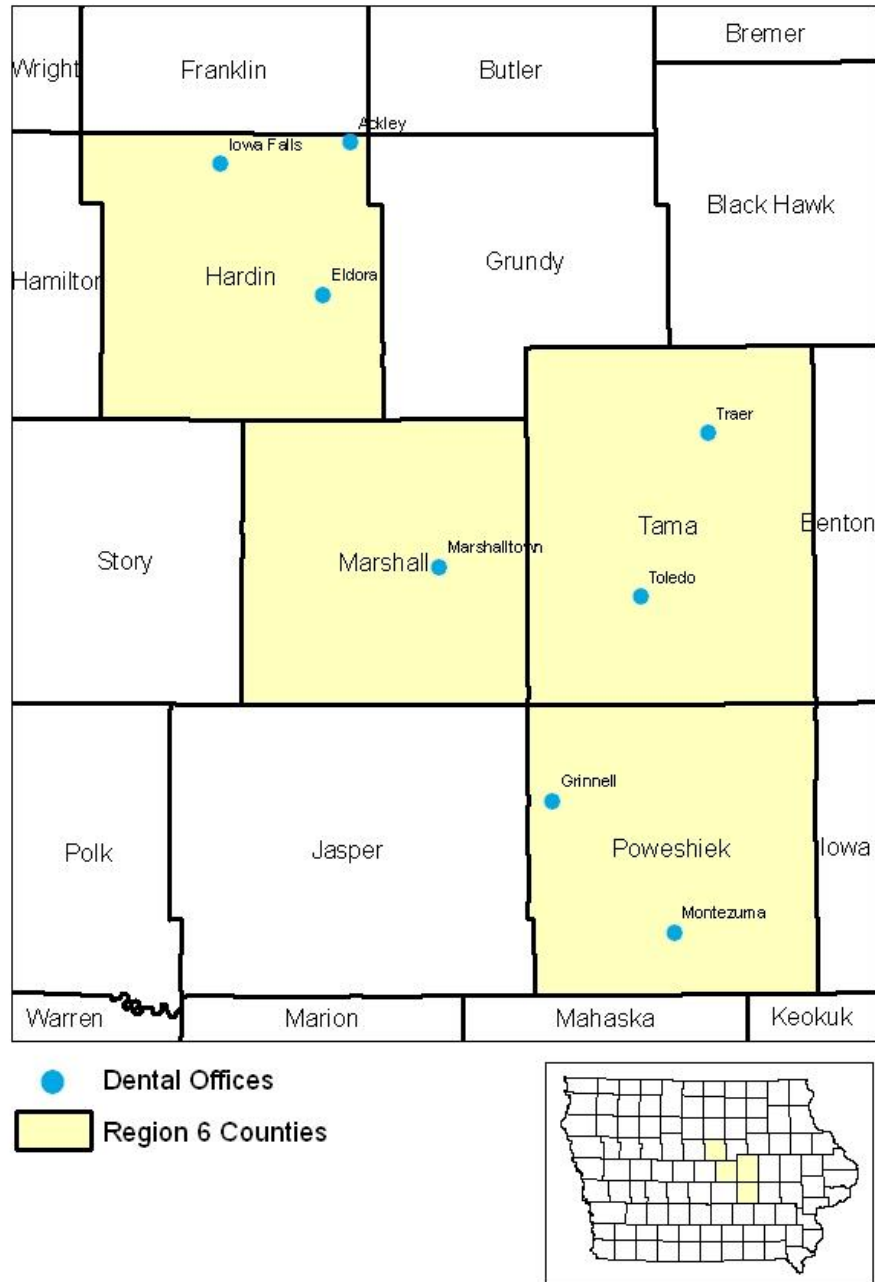
The total of capital expenditures listed on the attached sheet is \$4,450,000. The total capital needed to continue current services is \$3,035,000. The expansion capital needs are \$1,415,000.

The total of all priority project expenditures over five years is \$12,611,000. The state and federal assistance amount for these projects is \$8,475,050, leaving a local share needed of \$4,135,950. The local share is \$44/person for the five-year time frame.

ATTACHMENTS

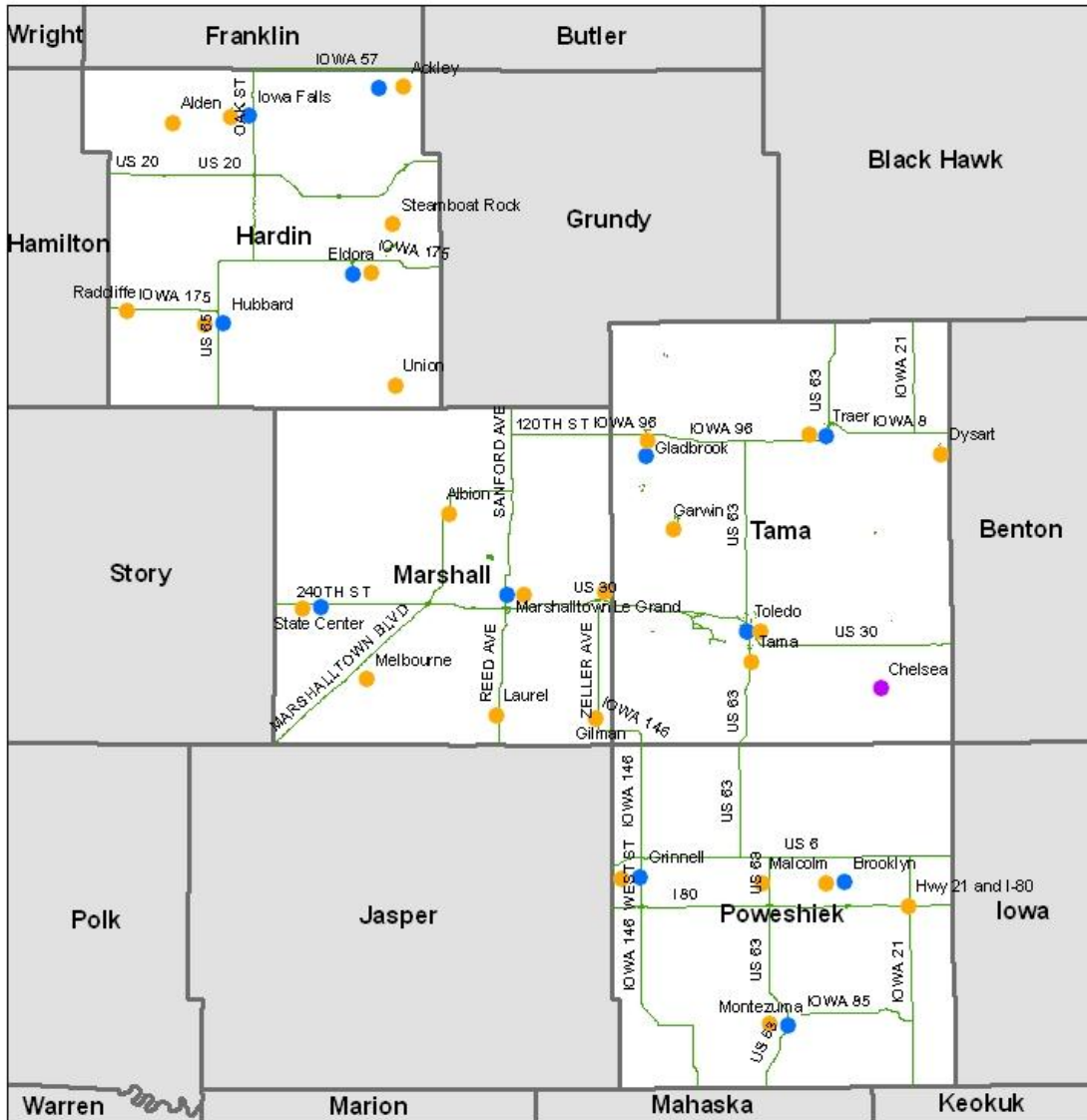
Region 6 Dental Offices

Map By Alicia Rosman
01/05/2010



Region 6 Grocery and Convenience Stores

Map By Alicia Rosman
01/18/2010

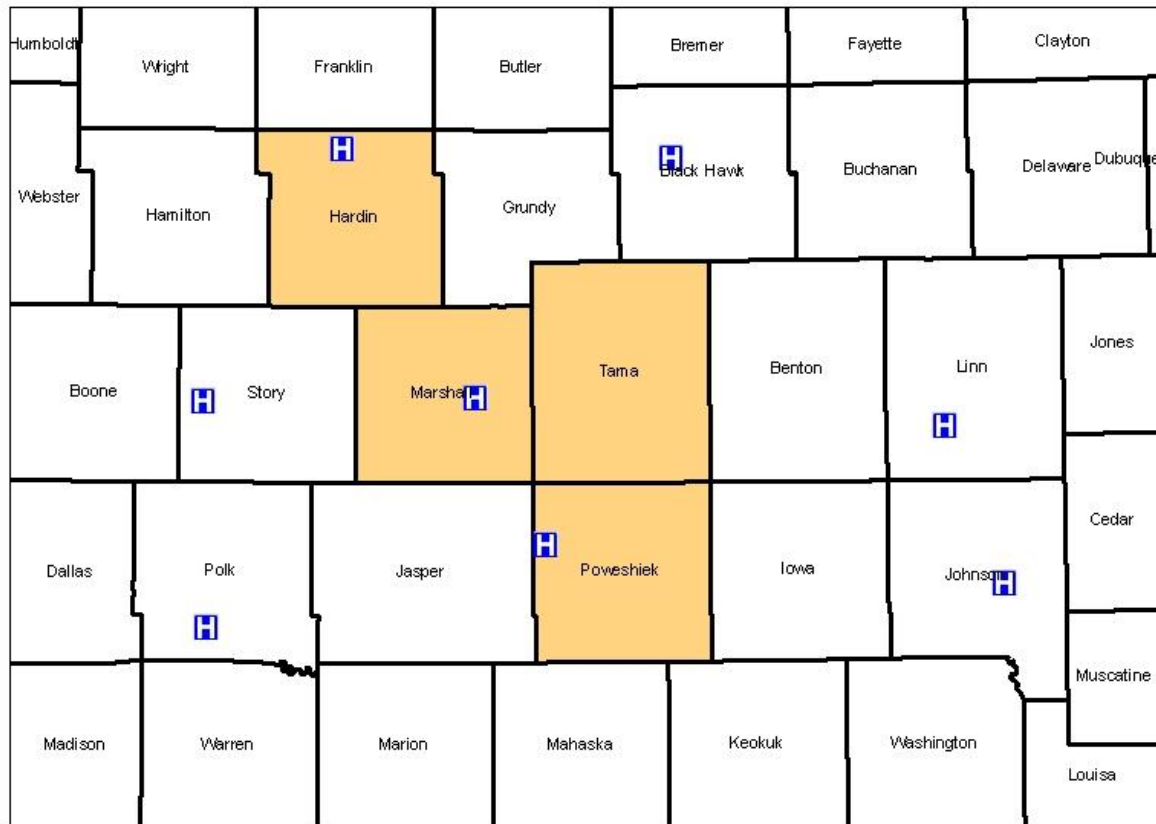


- Gas Station Only
- City with Gas Station/Convenience Store(s)
- City with Grocery Store(s)
- Highway
- Region 6 Counties



Region 6 and Surrounding Area Hospitals

Map By Alicia Rosman
1/05/2010



Hospital

Region 6 Counties

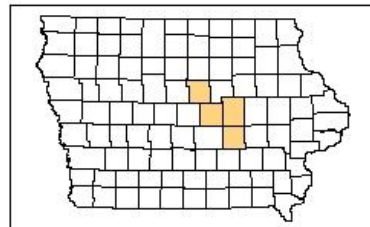
Hospital(s) By County

Region 6 Hospitals

Hardin County - Ellsworth Municipal Hospital, Iowa Falls
Marshall County - Marshalltown Medical and Surgical Center
Poweshiek County - Grinnell Regional Medical Center

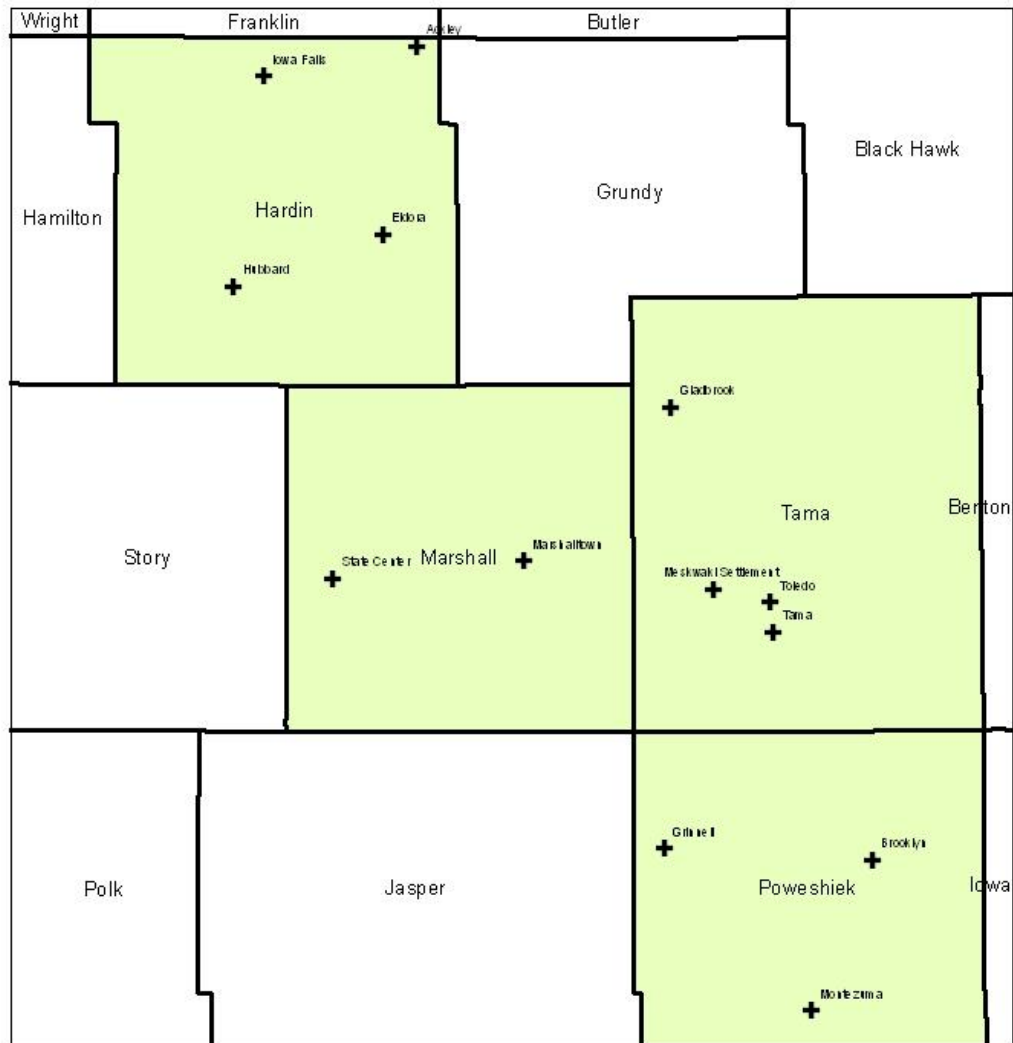
Surrounding Area Hospitals

Story County - Mary Greeley Medical Center, Ames
Polk County - Iowa Methodist Medical Center, Mercy Medical Center,
Iowa Lutheran Medical Center, Blank Children's Hospital, VA Medical Center, Des Moines
Black Hawk County - Covenant Medical Center, Allen Memorial Hospital,
Sartori Memorial Hospital, Waterloo/Cedar Falls
Linn County - Mercy Medical Center, St. Luke's Hospital, Cedar Rapids
Johnson County - Mercy Hospital, University of Iowa Hospital, VA Medical Center, Iowa City

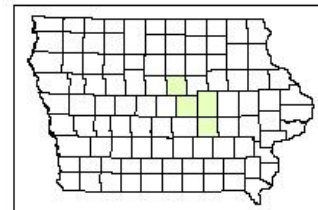


Region 6 Medical Clinics

Map By Alicia Rosman
01/05/2010

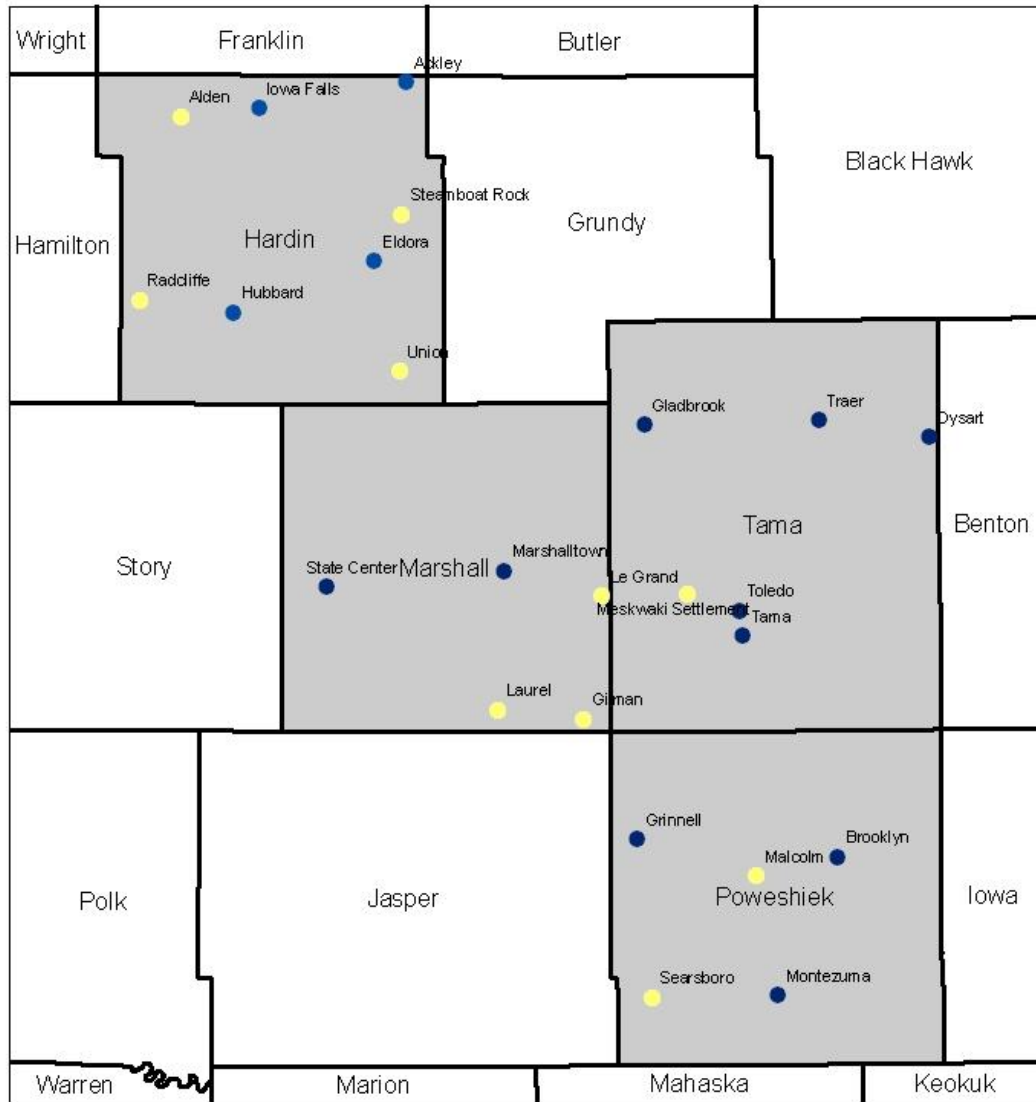


- Medical Clinics
- Region 6 Counties

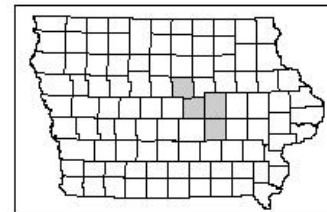


Region 6 Nursing Facilities, Assisted Living, and Elderly Apartments

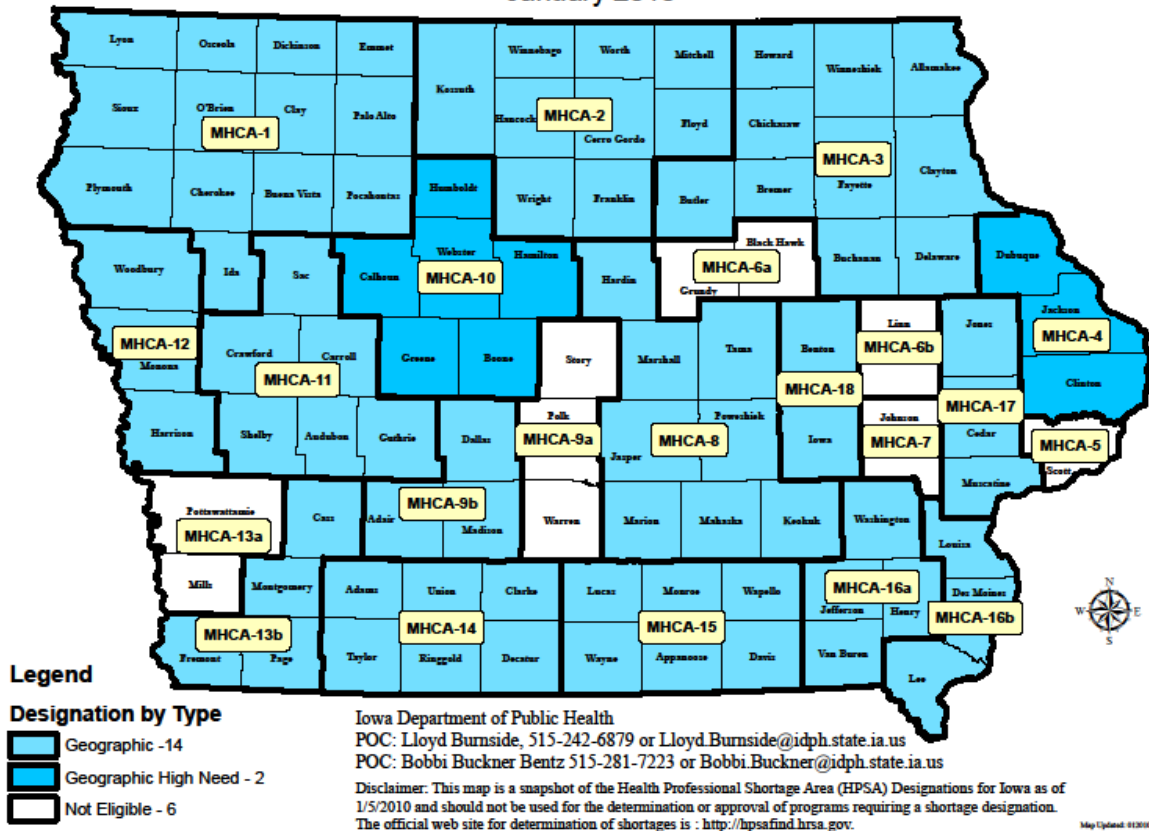
Map By Alicia Rosman
01/05/2010



- Elderly Apartments
- Nursing Facilities, Assisted Living, AND Elderly Apartments
- Region 6 Counties

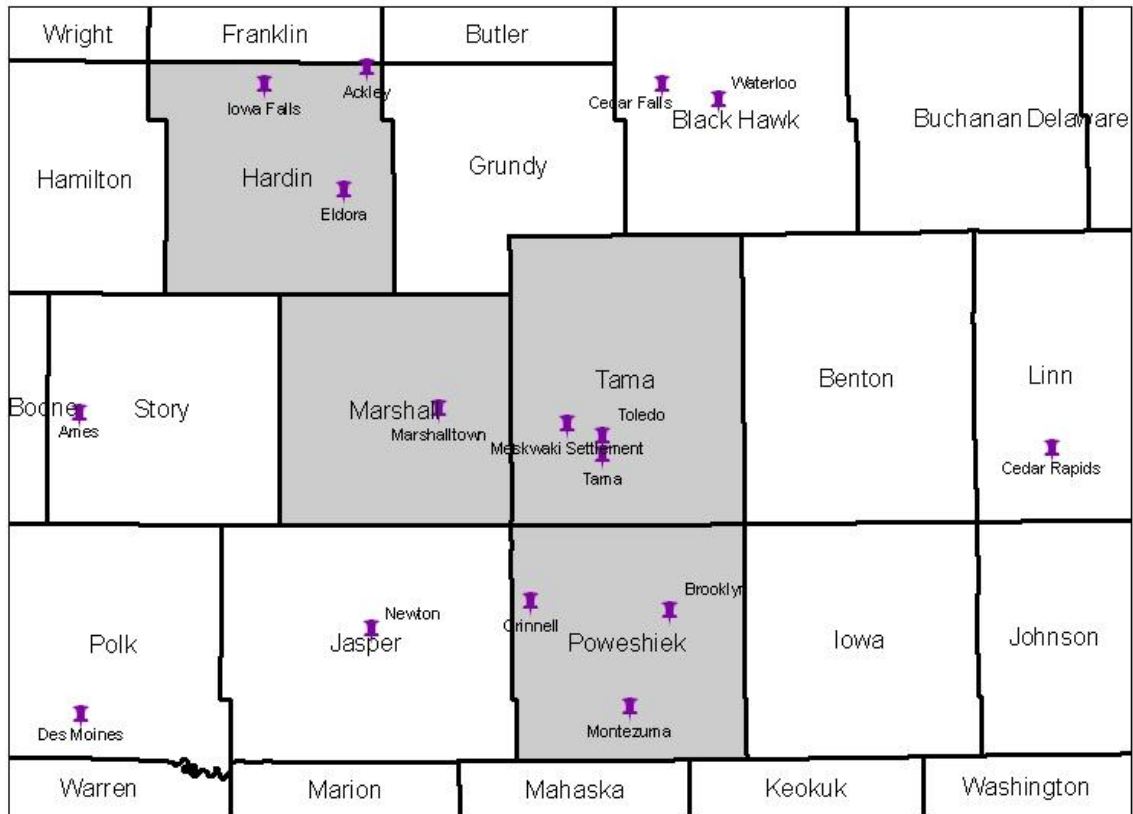




Federal Mental Health Care Shortage Designations January 2010

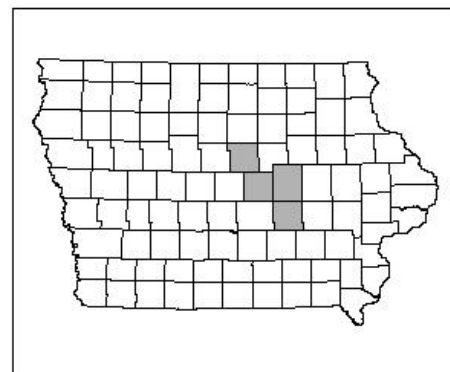


Major Employment Centers In and Around Region 6

Map By Alicia Rosman
01/05/2010



-  Major Employment Centers
-  Region 6 Counties



SURVEY MONKEY RESULTS

